

Hafa Adai!

Weekly Chamorro-Carolinian Cultural Roadmap unveiled. **PAGE 2**

CGC hosts Naloxone Training of Trainers. **PAGE 3**

\$1

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Tropical Storm Condition 3 raised in CNMI



RACQUEL FLOYD
Homeland Security Emergency and Management spokesperson Bernard Villagomez provides updates yesterday at 10am during the media briefing of then Tropical Disturbance Invest 95 at the HSEM operation center on Capitol Hill.

By **RACQUEL H. FLOYD**
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CORRESPONDENT

Acting governor David M. Apatang at 2pm yesterday declared Tropical Storm Condition III for Saipan, Tinian, and Rota after Invest 95W was upgraded to Tropical Depression 14W.

Apatang raised Tropical Storm Condition III after consulting with the CNMI Homeland Security and Emergency Management and the National Weather Service's Weather Forecast Office. **See STORM on Page 4**

Day 3 expected to be final day of Abraczinskas trial

By **CHRYSTAL MARINO**
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CORRESPONDENT

Defense attorneys involved in the jury trial of a former law clerk accused of rape believe that unlike previous estimations, the trial will most likely end earlier than expected.



Abraczinskas

trial for William Abraczinskas, both parties briefly told the media at the Superior Court in Supepe that they believe the trial is expected to end today, instead of carrying on to Thursday or Friday, the dates originally expected for the trial.

After Day 2 of the jury

When asked for further **See TRIAL on Page 4**

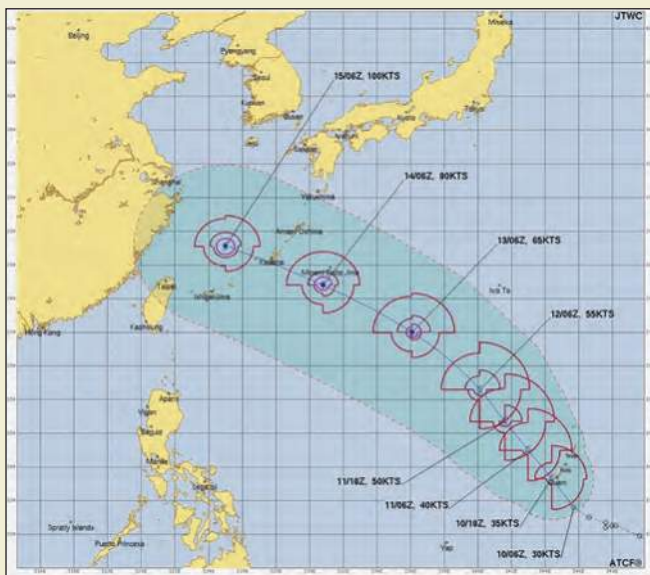
WITH TROPICAL DEPRESSION 14W'S APPROACH Coast Guard tells boats to leave CNMI, Guam ports

The U.S. Coast Guard Captain of the Port has upgraded from Port Heavy Weather Condition WHISKEY to a modified YANKEE for the ports of Guam and the CNMI as of 3pm Tuesday, Sept. 10, 2024.

It essentially means all commercial ships still present need to get ready to finish loading and unloading their cargo and leave the ports of Guam and the CNMI.

The COTP upgraded the condition level in preparation for the arrival of Tropical Depression 14W.

As of 2pm, the National



USGC
Warning graphic showing the forecasted path and intensity of Tropical Depression 14W from the Joint Typhoon Warning Center.

Weather Service forecast projects the storm to pass near Guam on Wednesday as a tropical storm. Guam and the CNMI are under a tropical storm warning, surf warning, small craft advisory, and flood watch.

U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam personnel are working

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Audit finds \$51.96M in total questioned costs of federal funds

» **CNMI agrees, disagrees on findings; makes corrective actions**

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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CORRESPONDENT

An independent auditor has found \$51.96 million in total questioned costs of federal funds as it identified certain deficiencies in CNMI's in-

ternal control over financial reporting and on compliance based on an audit of its financial statements.

The CNMI government agrees to certain findings and disagrees on some, and made

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INSIDE



BUSINESS

CNMI Broadband Policy and Development said it's now transitioning to the exciting subgrant selection process for infrastructure projects after completed 10 milestones for the Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment program.

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WORLD

A long robot entered a damaged reactor at Japan's Fukushima nuclear power plant on Tuesday, beginning a two-week, high-stakes mission to retrieve for the first time a tiny amount of melted fuel debris from the bottom.

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LIFE & STYLE

James Earl Jones, who overcame racial prejudice and a severe stutter to become a celebrated icon of stage and screen—eventually lending his deep, commanding voice to CNN, "The Lion King" and Darth Vader—has died.

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Local

Weekly Chamorro-Carolinian Cultural Roadmap unveiled

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
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CORRESPONDENT

The CNMI’s identity, pride, and indigenous way of life is something to be shared not once a year but constantly, and to better do this, especially during Chamorro and Carolinian Heritage Month, a cultural learning experience will now be held every week at the NMI Museum of History and Culture and the Carolinian Utt in Garapan.

Beginning last Friday, the Chamorro-Carolinian Cultural Roadmap will be a stop for community members, students, and tourists alike to learn about the cultures of the indigenous peoples of the CNMI.

It will showcase live demonstrations of the rich cultural aspects of growing up in the Marianas—from coconut weaving and oil making, mwar compositions, and Lighatüttür beading, to traditional Chamorro and Carolinian dances, ancient storytelling, playing the ukelele, and even fishing techniques like talaya and lure casting.

Indigenous Affairs Office resident executive Luella



NMI Museum of History and Culture executive director Leonard “Leni” Leon speaks to students just before start of the first Chamorro and Carolinian Cultural Roadmap last Thursday at the NMI Museum in Garapan.

Marciano said they are looking forward to including two more experiences such as fish processing and amut or local medicine composition.

She shared that the program demonstrations begin at 9:15am and wrap up just before 12pm. During that time, students will go through and participate in stations at the NMI Museum such as mwar making, ancient storytelling, local chanting, coconut oil making, Carolinian dancing, and sinahi artists. They will then later go to the Carolinian Utt to learn Chamorro dances, basic ukelele playing, banana art, Lighatüttür beading, and fishing lures and talaya casting. She credited NMI Museum executive director Leonard “Leni” Leon for the initial idea.

Leon shared with *Saipan Tribune* the inception of the Chamorro-Carolinian Cultural Roadmap.

“So, there are three components to this program. One is for the Public School System’s Chamorro-Carolinian

Language Heritage and Arts Program. It’s also for public and then the third part is for tourists. It’s to provide some space for everybody to come together, but mainly for PSS students from different schools to come together in a cultural space during regular school hours. It’s a little more exciting and an incentive for being a CCLHS student.”

He said the goal was to provide opportunities for CCLHS students to visit Chamorro and Carolinian cultural sites and learn about the cultures as well as to participate in cultural activities. Alongside the students, the program was also made for the benefit of tourists and community members who want to learn more about the indigenous cultures of the CNMI.

Leon also explained that although the NMI Museum proposed the idea, bringing the Chamorro-Carolinian Cultural Roadmap to life was a joint effort between PSS and the Chamorro-Carolinian Heritage Month Committee. The committee consists of the Office of Indigenous Affairs, Carolinian Affairs Office, Commonwealth Council for Arts & Culture, Marianas Visitors Authority, Northern Marianas Humanities Council, Women’s Affairs Office, Saipan Mayor’s Office, Northern Islands Mayor’s Office, and the NMI Museum of History and Culture.

“It was really everybody’s inputs that really shaped the program to what it is now,” he said.

Leon added that another goal of the program—the reason why both cultures are mingled and showcased at each site—was to display that both indigenous groups can be in the same space without butting heads.

“That’s one of the goals. It is to showcase that a space can be created for them to unite, but then also, as a CCLHS program, to show everyone that the Chamorros and the Carolinians cultures can unite and be in the same space without clashing.”

Marciano echoed the same sentiment while mentioning the cultural diversity of the CNMI.

“Culture is very important. It is our identity. Much like a fingerprint. So, for us we need to celebrate it not only in September, but every day. That’s the message—let’s celebrate. If you’re a Chamorro, Carolinian, Palauan, whatever ethnic background you may have, anybody that came here to make the CNMI their home

and celebrate your culture. It is you. So, our message to the public is to stand up and celebrate, showcase who you are and bring in your culture so that we can understand you better. In doing that we can live harmoniously. The CNMI has such diverse islands full of cultures. Here on Saipan alone, we have a lot of diverse cultures. So, every day it needs to be celebrated. Each one of us is like a fingerprint of our own. In order for us to respect and understand each other, let’s promote and showcase so that we can understand, this is how we can understand each other and live harmoniously.”

Attendees of the Chamorro-Carolinian Cultural Roadmap expressed their gratitude for the program.

“Thank you! A big thank you to them,” said Chamorro dance demonstrator April Repeki. “Because if it wasn’t for them, we wouldn’t be able to expose or showcase the art of the Marianas and then to have it also passed down. They don’t have to be Chamorro, Carolinian, but at least they understand where it comes from and that it’s going to continue to be passed down to the next artist, a person who has that interest to do what we do.”

She also shared the importance of perpetuating culture.

“It’s what identifies us as Chamorro and Carolinian people of the CNMI, right? Through art, through weaving, and through dance, through music, through the Lighatüttür making. It’s so important that we need to continue to expose our culture so that the youth, not only our Chamorro, Carolinian children, but whoever lives on the islands know about our culture.”

Leanna Borja, a CCLHS teacher at Koblerville Elementary School, also shared her gratitude for the launch of the Chamorro-Carolinian Cultural Roadmap.

“It’s a beautiful thing to watch, having this collaboration with the schools. It’s giving the kids or students something to look forward to, and they’ll be able to learn something about our culture and the resources we have on island. Hopefully it’s something that they can pick up and share with their families, their friends, and through it hopefully we can promote and perpetuate it even more. To those who made this happen *Si Yu’use Ma’ase* and please continue doing it. We need to push and encourage our kids every chance we get.”

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CHCC
Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center's Heather Lusk, center, poses with participants of Naloxone Training of Trainers held last Sept. 5.



CHCC
A total of 35 CNMI trainers are now certified to train others within their agencies and community members on how to administer the life-saving medication for individuals experiencing an opioid overdose.

In partnership with the Opioid Response Network, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s Community Guidance Center hosted the Naloxone Training of Trainers on Sept. 5, 2024. The training was facilitated by Heather Lusk of the Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center.

With full support by the CHCC CEO Dr. Esther L. Muna, the first cohort of the training included CHCC staff, local partners from the Department of Public Safety, Department of Corrections, Department of Fire & Emergency Services, Division of Customs and Biosecurity, Substance Abuse, Addiction, and Rehabilitation-HOPE Recovery Center, Office of Adult Probation, Mental Health and Drug Court, Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, and federal partners from the U.S. Homeland Security Investigations and Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Subsequent trainings in the upcoming months will be delivered to CHCC personnel, behavioral health partners, and stakeholders on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

In an effort to build local workforce capacity and readiness to prevent the opioid epidemic from devastating the CNMI community, a total of 35 trainers are certified to train others within their




agencies and community members on how to administer the life-saving medication for individuals experiencing an opioid overdose. **(PR)**

CHCC
Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center's Heather Lusk facilitated the Naloxone Training of Trainers.



**COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION**
Office of the Executive Director



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-24-019
LEASE OF MIDSIZE TRUCKS AND COMPACT SEDANS

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified Vendors for the Lease and Delivery of Brand-New Midsize Trucks and Compact Sedans in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The RFP Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$50.00 (non-refundable) for one RFP package set.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-RFP-24-019, Lease and Delivery of Midsize Trucks and Compact Sedans"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on September 24, 2024.** Late submissions and conditional RFP will not be considered.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers who submit proposal determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. All proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from the proposal submitted by competing proposers.

All Offerors are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Offeror due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Proposer's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract.

This Request for Proposal does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of the proposals under this request, or to procure or contract for services. The Proposers are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RFP and ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on September 2, 2024,** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC's Purchasing Administrator, via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Vicente Deleon Guerrero, Compliance Administrator via email vicente.deleon-guerrero@cucgov.org, and to Marcela Tenorio, Senior Administrative Technician at marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said RFP, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

KEVIN O. WATSON
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY**
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 23, 2024 TIME: 10:00AM (CHST)
LEASE OF VEHICLES
ITB24-CHCC/ IMMUNIZATION-028

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWNLOAD THIS INVITATION TO BID FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.HEALTH]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS** TAB ON THE LEFT NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

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/S/ CORA P. ADA
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‘We Will Never Forget: Field of Heroes Month’ ceremony postponed

By **RACQUEL H. FLOYD**
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CORRESPONDENT

The “We Will Never Forget: Field of Heroes Month” 9/11 commemoration ceremonies on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota have been postponed due to Tropical Depression 14W.

The event’s supposed schedule at 11am today on Tinian will be moved to Sept. 20, while the 4pm

schedule at American Memorial Park on Saipan today will be moved to Sept. 18, according to Tan Holdings Community Relations vice president Catherine Attao-Toves. Rota, which 9/11 commemoration ceremony is scheduled on Friday, Sept. 13, has no schedule yet.

It was last Aug. 26 when Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang proclaimed Sep-

tember as “We Will Never Forget of Heroes Month.” The proclamation marks the 23rd anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks.

According to Attao-Toves, there will be no changes on the activities scheduled on Sept. 18. As part of the “We Will Never Forget: Field of Heroes Month,” U.S. flags throughout the CNMI will be displayed at various parks to honor

the lives lost and the heroic actions taken by first responders, veterans, and medical personnel.

The community is still encouraged to join the “We Will Never Forget” ceremony on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. It was also during the proclamation when Department of Corrections’ Lynnae Yobec read the “We Will Never Forget: Field of Heroes Month”

proclamation, highlighting the significance of the 23rd anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks. She emphasized the profound impact of 9/11 on the nation and the resilience shown by its citizens in the face of tragedy. She explained that the resolution commemorates the lives lost during the attacks and the ongoing support for the families affected by the tragedy.

STORM

From page 1

in Tiyan, Guam.

Tropical Storm Condition III means that tropical-storm-force winds of at least 39mph are expected within 24 hours. A tropical storm warning means that a tropical storm force winds of at least 39mph are expected within 24 hours.

Tropical Depression 14W is moving west at 9mph. It is expected to make a turn toward the northwest with a slight increase in forward speed through Wednesday.

This current forecast track sends Tropical Depression 14W over or near Guam early Wednesday morning. With maximum sustained winds of 30mph, Tropical Depression 14W is forecast to intensify through Tuesday night and is expected to become a tropical storm overnight. Once to the northwest of Guam, it is expected to continue intensifying over the Philippine Sea.

With the coming of Tropical Depression 14W, Apatang advised the community yesterday to keep a close watch on official updates relating to weather forecasts and stay informed on the latest statements and advisories which will be available through

official channels.

In yesterday morning’s update, Homeland Security Emergency and Management spokesperson Bernard Villagomez provided a weather update on the then tropical disturbance. He said Invest 95W was expected to pass through the Marianas region near Guam as a tropical depression on Tuesday afternoon or evening. During that time HSEM said there were no tropical storm and typhoon warnings issued yet for the CNMI.

Villagomez said that the CNMI is likely to experience stronger winds and increased rainfall of up to 48 inches as the system passes.

The HSEM recommended that the community take standard preparedness precautions. There was a wind advisory in effect from 6am to 6pm today and a flood watch that’s in effect through late Thursday night. A high surf advisory is in effect until 6am on Friday.

The weather update is an evolving situation about the direction, speed, intensification rate, and other attributes of the storm that may change over the next few hours. The CNMI Office of the Governor and CNMI HSEM said they will continuously monitor the movement of the storm and will continue to consult with the National Weather

Service and other agencies.

Meanwhile, the CNMI Public School System announced that after the 2pm declaration of the Office of the Governor that schools will remain open today.

“This is to inform you that we are aware of the anticipated weather forecasts. As of 2m today, acting governor David M. Apatang declared Tropical Storm Condition III for Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. Rest assured, we are in close communication with the appropriate government agencies and we are on standby for any new updates,” it said in a statement.

As of last night, PSS said classes remain in operation today, Wednesday, Sept. 11, 2024.

“Schools are aware of implementing their inclement weather Standard Operating Procedures, which limits outdoor activities for students. We will provide more updates as soon as they become available.”

For the most up-to-date and accurate information, follow PSS’ official social media pages below.

- Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/cnmipss>
- Instagram: <http://www.instagram.com/cnmipss/>
- District website: <https://www.cnmipss.org>

AUDIT

From page 1

correction action plans.

Ernst & Young (CNMI) Inc. was hired by the Office of the Public Auditor to audit the CNMI’s statements for the year ended Sept. 30, 2021.

Ernst & Young also recently submitted to Gov. Arnold I. Palacios an audit report on their consideration of the CNMI’s internal control over financial reporting and on their tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements and other matters.

Of the total \$51.96 million questioned costs, among those found by the auditor were the \$20.34 million from COVID-19 Coronavirus Relief Fund; \$18.35 million from Community Disaster Loans; \$3.37 million from CNMI Nutrition Assistance; \$2.77 million from Coronavirus State and Local Recovery Funds Child Care and Development Fund; \$1.30 million from Child Disaster Relief; \$1.24 million from Economic, Social, and Political Development of the Territories; \$1.13 million from Unemployment Insurance; and \$1.03 million from Coronavirus State and Local Recovery Funds Child Care and Development Fund.

Regarding the questioned \$20.34

million costs from COVID-19 Coronavirus Relief Fund, the auditor found that of nine expenditures tested, aggregating \$20.8 million of a total population of \$25 million, for two (or 22%), either the check payments and/or invoices were not provided.

One check and/or invoice was in the amount of \$2,768, while the second was \$20,339,145, or for a total amount of \$20,341,913.

The auditor said the cause was that the CNMI did not enforce monitoring controls over compliance with applicable allowable costs/cost principle requirements.

The auditor said the CNMI is in noncompliance with applicable allowable costs/cost principles requirements and this resulted to \$20,341,913 questioned costs.

The auditor recommends that the CNMI should strengthen monitoring controls over compliance with applicable allowable costs/cost principles requirements.

In the CNMI’s response, the Department of Finance agrees with the auditor’s findings. Finance said they have completed their review and proposed adjustments to accurately reflect expenditures in compliance with grant policies and requirements.

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

COAST

From page 1

proactively with port partners and the commercial industry to assess and mitigate risks to the port and vessels by reviewing heavy weather plans and ensuring facilities and vessels are ready for the storm, given this projected intensification. All port users have been notified of this change in status.

Port Heavy Weather Condition YANKEE indicates winds above 39 mph are expected within 24 hours.

Here is what happens when PHWC Yankee is declared:

1. All commercial ships still present need to get ready to finish loading and unloading their cargo and leave the ports of Guam and the CNMI.
2. If there are ships that can’t move on their own, like those with no power, or other types of vessels like barges and drydocks that can’t go out to sea, they must quickly send a written request to the COTP and have a plan to ride out the storm.
3. Once PHWC Yankee is in effect, all big commercial ships equal to or bigger than 200 tons must leave, and no more ships are allowed to enter the ports. Vessels may apply for an exception to this requirement.
4. While not currently forecasted,

if it gets even worse and PHWC Zulu is declared, the ports and marinas will be closed to incoming traffic, and all cargo and bunker operations will stop.

Remember, these actions are taken to keep everyone safe during the bad weather, reduce possible damage, and protect the port for faster reopening to resume the flow of vital commerce and any necessary relief supplies.

All mariners are encouraged to prepare adequately to ensure safety and prevent damage.

Inspect and secure: Conduct a thorough inspection of your vessel for any maintenance issues that could be exacerbated by rough weather. Secure all loose items both on deck and below.

Haul-out procedures: If possible, haul smaller watercraft out of the water to prevent damage from choppy conditions and debris. Store them in a secure location away from potential flood zones.

Mooring and docking: Double-check mooring lines and consider adding additional lines for stability. Ensure that docking locations are protected from direct wind and wave impacts.

Emergency equipment: Verify that all emergency equipment, including life jackets, emergency communication devices, and first-aid kits, are in good working condition

and properly stowed to prevent being washed out to sea, potentially prompting unnecessary searches.

Plan and communicate: Have a clear plan for what to do if conditions worsen unexpectedly, and communicate this plan to your crew and any nearby mariners. Stay informed about weather updates and advisories.

The U.S. Coast Guard sets Port Heavy Weather Conditions for the maritime community and ports. These conditions generally describe restrictions needed to protect life, vessels, facilities, ports, and the environment from severe weather. PHWCs are similar to the Tropical Cyclone Conditions of Readiness, but officials do not always set them in tandem.

For the latest advisory information, visit:

- National Weather Service (NWS) Website: <https://www.weather.gov/gum/>
- NWS Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NWSGuam/>
- Guam Homeland Security/Office of Civil Defense (GHS/OCD) Website: <https://ghs.guam.gov/>
- GHS/OCD Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GHSOCD/>
- Joint Region Marianas (JRM) Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/jrmguam>. (PR)

TRIAL

From page 1

details, attorneys said they were unable to share more at this time.

Yesterday on the second day of the rape trial, Department of Public Safety detectives Shannon Dela Cruz and Michelle Guerrero, Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo, and DPS police officer Hector Efraim served as witnesses. It closed with testimony from the alleged victim herself, where she shared her side of the story.

The alleged victim, a 50-year-old widow, mother, and grandmother shared that she is a judicial assistant at the Superior Court and has worked for the court for nearly 20 years. It was through her job that she met former coworker Abraczinkas.

According to the alleged victim, Abraczinkas had been hired after the initial person they were going to hire changed their minds about the position. She said that under the instruction of Govendo she was told to contact Abraczinkas to see if he would be interested in the position. According to her testimony, Abraczinkas had initially declined the position only to

contact back several days later and accept.

The alleged victim stated that he would ask a lot of questions regarding where he would stay and his means of transportation once he arrived, and she would forward questions she couldn’t answer to the HR department. She said that as this was her first time in the hiring process, she would ask advice from others more experienced on how to proceed. She said that he would continue to ask more questions even ones that had already been responded to by the HR department. With a daughter and son that had recently just relocated to the states, the alleged victim sympathized with him, telling the court that she wanted to help him. “I felt sorry for him...and I helped him.”

She went on to say that at their initial meeting, when Govendo introduced Abraczinkas to everyone, Abraczinkas surprised her by hugging her and giving her a peck on the cheek expressing his gratitude to her. She said it caught her off guard but she brushed it off.

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

Sanitary inspections of food establishments for August 2024

During the month of August 2024, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s Environmental Health Disease Prevention conducted sanitary inspections on retail, eating, and drinking establishments. Through this release, EHDP is providing names of establishments by inspection grade and names of establishments which were ordered to close for serious violations of health and sanitation standards. For these establishments, EHDP provides the suspension date and the date they were certified to resume operations.

Classifications for Food Safety Rating for an establishment receiving a score of:

- 0-10 Demerits Grade A
- 11-20 Demerits Grade B
- 21-30 Demerits Grade C
- Less than 30 closure/suspension

SAIPAN

Grade A

- Naked Fish Bar & Grill, Garapan
- Starsands, Chalan Lau-lau
- Xuan Market, Chalan Kanoa



MARK RABAGO

TOKYO café received Grade A from Environmental Health Disease Prevention's sanitary inspection last August.

- Jang Gun Restaurant, Garapan
- My Space Restaurant, Garapan
- Night Scent Restaurant, Garapan
- Green Leaves Store, Chalan Piao
- Lao Market, Chalan Kanoa
- Aiko's Deli, Susupe
- Midnight Karaoke, San Jose
- Marianas Water & Ice Co., Papago
- Marky's Kitchen &

- BBQ Grilled, Puerto Rico
- Coca-Cola Beverage Co. (Micronesia), Inc., Chalan Lau-lau
- Foremost Foods Saipan, Chalan Lau-lau
- Five Star Wholesale Foods, Chalan Kanoa
- Shell Dandan, Dandan
- Joeten Wholesale, Susupe
- CYC Market, Kagman
- New Matty's Bakery/Barbeque & Grill/Food Catering, As Lito
- Party & Beyond Restau-

Tavai attends Pacific Islander Convening at White House

WASHINGTON, DC—Delegate Uifa'atali Amata Rade-wagen's (R-A. Samoa) chief of staff Leafaina "Ina" Tavai represented her in attending the first White House Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Convening last Friday, Sept. 6, at the White House's historic Eisenhower Executive Office Building.

Tavai, a retired U.S. Army colonel, has led Radewagen's staff since Day 1 of her entire time in Congress, and is notably American Samoa's first ever graduate of a U.S. service academy—the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

Speakers at the event included Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland and FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell, CNMI Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, former Guam congressman Robert Underwood, and several others in NHPI leadership panels, and U.S. Trade representative Katherine Tai.

"I appreciate the invite, and I'm pleased with this focus on Pacific Islanders, as I've worked on these issues for years even before I served in Congress," said Radewagen. "The territories and Pacific Islands achieve the most when we work together in a bipartisan way, bringing in all the Governors and U.S. Representatives."

Radewagen has twice served prior administrations on their White House advisory boards for Asian and Pacific



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Delegate Uifa'atali Amata Rade-wagen's (R-A. Samoa) chief of staff Leafaina Tavai at the White House Executive Office during last Friday's first White House Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Convening.

Islander Americans. During this White House event, Radewagen was en route from

American Samoa, where she had spoken during the week to the ODAPM Disaster Resilience Summit and other activities in American Samoa. She has upcoming White House events on her schedule this month, including the 30th anniversary of the historic Violence Against Women Act.

The convening was the first with more planned for Pacific Islander leaders from across the country to engage with the administration in conjunction with the White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders.

"It was an honor to be there on behalf of congresswoman Amata and attest that it was a good discussion on Pacific Island issues that can lead to consensus for future efforts," said Tavai. (PR)



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Various Pacific island leaders spoke in a panel discussions during the first NHPI Convening.

- rant, Gualo Rai
- JG Sablan Water & Ice, Inc., Garapan
- Pho Tam Restaurant, Garapan
- M&M Fish Mart, Garapan
- UNI Catering, Chalan Lau-lau
- Dae Jang Kum Karaoke Resto Bar & Cafe, Susupe
- Coffee Stop, Kanat Tabla
- Tokyo Cafe, Susupe
- Coco Bear Cookies, Fina Sisu
- BM Barbeque Snack House, Susupe
- Avenue Restaurant, Garapan
- I Love Saipan 107 Shop, Susupe
- Mama Store, Garapan
- Han Nam Catering, Ko-

- blerville
- Pizza Hut, Gualo Rai
- Natibu's Kitchen, Ko-blerville
- Ohas Cafe / Bakery, Garapan

Grade B

- New Winscos, San Roque

Grade C

- Mo's Restaurant, Chalan Kanoa

TINIAN

Grade A

- Chana's Catering
- Triple J Wholesale to Everyone
- Mom & Pop Store

Grade B

- The Hangar Snack Bar
- Primo's Snack Bar
- MOT Meat Kualidat Slaughterhouse

Mo's Restaurant in Chalan Kanoa was ordered closed by EHDP for serious violations of health and sanitation standards. It was closed on Aug. 12, 2024 and reopened on Aug. 19, 2024.

For more information, contact the EHDP office at (670) 236-2022/27/28, or email the administrator of EHDP, John Tagabuel, at john.tagabuel@chcc.health.

For more information about CHCC programs, follow them on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950. (PR)



COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION Office of the Executive Director



INVITATION FOR BIDS CUC-IFB-24-021

AFETNAS WATERLINE REPLACEMENT and

AFETNAS SEWERLINE COLLECTION UPGRADE PH I

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Construction of Afetnas Waterline Replacement and Afetnas Sewerline Collection Upgrade in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The **Afetnas Waterline Replacement project** consists of replacing existing water mains on Afetna Road, Buninas Loop, Chalak Lane, Pios Drive, Uahu Lane, Toson Drive, Sata Drive, and Daddo Way. New water pipelines, saddles, corporation & curb stops, and relocation & reconnection to the existing water meters will be installed and done to accomplish the work. The work will include shallow excavations, rock-breaking, installing new flush & fire hydrants, pressure & air relief valves, connecting new service laterals, asphalt pavement restoration, installing flowable fill, and other appurtenances for a complete and functional water system.

The **Afetnas Sewerline Collection Upgrade Ph I project** consists of furnishing all labor, supervision, equipment, and materials for the construction of various improvements within an area. This work includes, but is not limited to installation of new gravity main and new sewer manholes, service laterals, connection of new service laterals to existing service laterals, abandonment of existing sewer manholes, and restoration of existing asphalt concrete road.

The work shall be done in accordance with the Project Plans and Specifications and without disruption to the daily operation of the water and sewer systems. CUC requires the Projects to be completed in 540 calendar days from the date of the award of the contract.

These projects are funded by grants from the United States American Rescue Plan Act (US ARPA) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA). The award of these projects is contingent upon receipt of approval for project awards from US ARPA and US EPA.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **September 12, 2024 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) copies of the bid must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-24-021, Afetnas Waterline Replacement and Afetnas Sewerline Collection Upgrade Ph I"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on October 7, 2024**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before the due date and time or post-marked before the due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety companies must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns, and qualifications shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contract nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility for any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to a lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of the Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing **no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on September 16, 2024**, to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org, with a copy to Kennet Bernardo, CUC Water/Wastewater Engineer via email kennet.bernardo@cucgov.org, and to Marcela Tenorio, CUC Senior Administrative Technician at marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and to waive any defects in said bid, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

KEVIN O. WATSON
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Opinion

Hafa Adail

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

Hostile meddling: Russia and Iran want a vote in our election

Foreign governments trying to tip the scales of American elections is nothing new, but the brazenness with which Russia and Iran are meddling in the 2024 presidential election is notable.

In a DOJ indictment, federal authorities announced charges and sanctions against Russian-government-linked operatives for interfering to boost Donald Trump, including funneling \$10 million to the U.S.-based Tenet Media, which employs right-wing and pro-Russia propagandist including Tim Pool, Benny Johnson and Dave Rubin.

Separately, Iran has been setting up fake news sites and taken other steps to sow political discord, at least partly aimed at hurting Trump's chances. Kamala Harris should not welcome this support from the mullahs nor should Trump bask in being the Kremlin's favorite, though Trump at least has seemed happy with foreign interference on his behalf before.

The American internet personalities funneled millions in Moscow's cash—unwittingly, they claim—should do some self-reflection, though we won't be holding our breath for the likes of Benny Johnson to take time for contemplation. At the very least, they should explain why it seems the Russian state thought they were such a good investment.

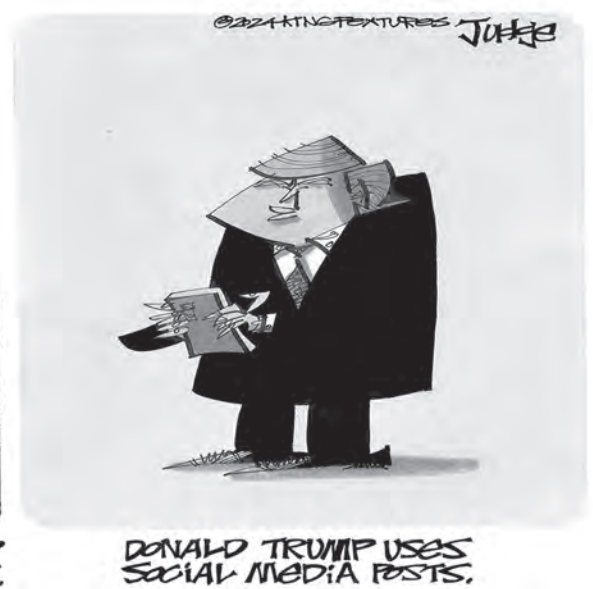
Russia and Iran are particularly nasty players and adversaries on the world stage, but of course we don't want anyone trying to stick their mitts in our elections, even friends. Other countries are inevitably going to have an interest in political affairs that determine the direction of this country. But they can make their preferences known through official communiques and registered lobbying, not subterfuge, astroturfing, direct political spending or troll armies.

Part of the trouble is the difficulty in rooting out these campaigns and taking action against them. The commentators that took the Russian money still, of course, are perfectly within their First Amendment rights to parrot Putin talking points. The funneling of the money is a crime but it is not a crime for the recipients to be unwitting useful idiots. The kind of speech that the Iranians are fomenting with their fake sites and the Russians are stoking with their bot armies is perfectly permissible political speech when engaged in by Americans airing their views.

That legitimate and illegitimate political speech can look identical makes it harder to police, and generates the risk that overzealous government responses will end up violating free speech rights. That's why we need the tech giants that often facilitate and host this content to be more proactive about preventing misuse in the first place—for example, building in safeguards to prevent large language models to easily emulate voters and spread political messages—and Washington to respond forcefully with diplomatic pressure and tangible consequences for countries found to be engaged in these efforts.

More broadly, it wouldn't hurt to get Americans a bit more media literate so they're not as susceptible to these influence campaigns in the first place. The weakening of public faith in media and other institutions is helping produce the information free-for-all, which benefits no one and makes it impossible for many people to tell fact from fiction. It won't be easy, but we must inch back to a place where we can all at least live in the same reality.

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Keeping the Philadelphi Corridor will endanger Israel's security and doom the remaining hostages

Imagine if you were the parent or child of one of the Israeli hostages still held by Hamas terrorists in Gaza, and you knew your loved ones were being abandoned by your own government for political reasons.

That is effectively what is happening as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu insists on changing the terms of a U.S.-backed cease-fire-for-hostage deal in a way that is guaranteed to kill it.

The primary sticking point revolves around a narrow strip of sandy land—known as the Philadelphi Corridor—which is nine miles long, around 100 yards wide, and runs along the border between Gaza and Egypt.

Netanyahu appeared to agree initially, in May, to pull Israeli troops back from the Philadelphi strip at the start of a three-stage deal that would include the release of dozens of hostages. But now he insists that keeping Israeli forces on the corridor indefinitely is the key to victory over Hamas and the release of further hostages.

Yet, Israel's top military and intelligence officials, its defense establishment, as well as U.S. negotiators, all challenge Netanyahu's inflated claims about Philadelphi, and his reasons for making them. So do U.S., Egyptian, and Qatari negotiators, and even members of Israel's own team of negotiators.

They all believe the prime minister rejects any deal not out of security concerns but because his right-wing ministers would quit the government, and he'd lose power.

"To make sure that there will be no hostage deal that will collapse your coalition, you turned Philadelphi into the rock of our existence," charged Nadav Argaman, who headed the Shin Bet, Israel's domestic security agency, from 2016 to 2021, in a speech last week. "No, it is not!" he said.

Argaman and many other top security experts challenge Netanyahu's claim that Israel must keep forces along the corridor to prevent Hamas from smuggling arms from Egypt into Gaza via underground tunnels. They say this distorts history.

After Israel withdrew from Gaza in 2005, most of the Hamas arms smuggling from Egypt was done over land, via the Rafah border crossing, not via tunnels. During much of that time, Netanyahu was prime minister, with a policy of letting goods and cash flow into Gaza as a way (he thought) of buying Hamas off.

Moreover, once the military government of Abdel Fattah el-Sisi took power in 2014, it began cracking down on border smuggling to Gaza as a threat to its own power. Now it is willing to do far more because it wants to see Hamas destroyed permanently.

All of the 10 or so onetime major tunnels that led from Egypt (and were connected to unnumberable smaller tunnels inside Gaza) are blocked now, Israeli experts told me. That certainly doesn't mean there won't be a need to secure the Gaza-Egypt border in the future. But the United States has been working with Egypt for months, in consultation with Israeli officials, on devising sophisticated technological solutions.

"We think we can fully account for Israel's security needs on that corridor in ways that will be unprecedented and that does not require some alternative security force," a senior administration official told journalists Wednesday.

Think sensors, deep underground iron walls, drones, and much more.

Yet, there are even deeper strategic reasons why Netanyahu's stress on Philadelphi is so misleading—and so dangerous.

"Not getting into this deal is more of a threat to Israel's long-

By TRUDY RUBIN

The Philadelphia Inquirer

Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editorial-board member for the The Philadelphia Inquirer.



term security than actually concluding the deal, and that includes the issue of the Philadelphi Corridor," a senior administration official told Israel media this week.

Why so? If there is no cease-fire, and Israeli military outposts remain perched on this narrow stretch of road, they would be sitting ducks for aboveground attack, as they were when Israel occupied that corridor before 2005 and suffered dozens of casualties.

"It is impossible from a military point of view to hold that narrow corridor," I was told by phone from Israel by Ami Ayalon, a former head of the Shin Bet from 1995 to 2000.

"To keep the corridor would mean we have to reoccupy all of Gaza. And we know what happened when we stayed on in Lebanon," he said. (What happened was that Israel pulled out after 18 years of fighting a Hezbollah insurgency.)

Staying on as an occupying power, Ayalon noted, would enmesh the military in another endless insurgency. Occupation would mean controlling two million dispossessed Gazans living in ruins, which would inevitably foster a new insurgency. Without hope for a better alternative future, young Gazans will have nothing to lose.

That's why Israeli military commanders understand that they have reached the limits of what can be achieved by military power, Ayalon said. They believe they have destroyed Hamas' infrastructure and leadership and its ability to function as an organization, even if individual terrorists remain.

Now is the time for a political deal, backed by the United States and moderate Arab nations, that stabilizes Gaza and brings in Persian Gulf and international funds to bring in humanitarian aid and rebuild.

A hostage/cease-fire deal would be a start; if the first phase led to an impasse, the military insists it could reverse any pullback before moving on to a second phase. Once Netanyahu said yes, the pressure on Hamas to accept the deal would be global and massive.

Instead of getting to yes, however, Netanyahu repeatedly instructs his negotiators to bargain, then publicly contradicts them by refusing any compromise on Philadelphi.

If the Israeli leader kills all hope for a hostage/cease-fire deal, there is no other political prospect for ending the fighting in Gaza.

"After 11 months, the military understands that the lack of a political goal for the war becomes a military issue," Ayalon said. "You send your military to achieve a better political goal, to bring the enemy to a position where he will accept your goals, not to kill all your enemies. But if there is no political definition [of an endgame], that means the war becomes the end, not the means. That opens the gate to endless war."

See KEEPING on Page 7

Mass shootings are a result of the GOP's moral collapse

In theory, school shootings are tragic.

Indeed, after Wednesday's mass shooting at Apalachee High School in Georgia—four murdered, nine injured—Georgia Bureau of Investigation Director Chris Hosey expressed gratitude that “a much larger tragedy” had been prevented. It was a win, of sorts.

I don't mean to criticize Hosey. But the notion that mass shootings constitute a genuine tragedy is inconsistent with the sturdy refusal to reduce their number or severity. “I don't like that this is a fact of life,” said GOP vice presidential nominee JD Vance.

A wealthy, technologically advanced society that declares “nothing can be done” when quite a lot can be done is making a statement about its hierarchy of values. In many locales, including Georgia, guns, and the men who cherish them, are higher on the list than children and those who cherish them.

In an effort to cast mass murder in a more negative light and assign responsibility for its frequency, anti-violence activists have taken to calling shootings like the one in Georgia “a choice.” As political rhetoric, I don't know how effective that is. But as a statement of fact, “choice” is indisputable. People in France, for example, choose to make it difficult to commit mass murder with a semi-automatic firearm. People in the state of Georgia, on the other hand, choose to make it very easy.

That choice flows directly from an ideology that privileges criminals and other individual bad actors over the freedom and safety of society at large. After all, why would lawmakers enable someone to buy a gun at a flea market without a background check, as Georgia does, if they valued society's prerogative to life more than the unfettered sway of the most violent individual in the state? Why not simply funnel all gun buyers into the background-check system, which takes only minutes to process? The answer, of course, is that Georgia lawmakers deliberately choose not to. They value the killer's self-actualizing autonomy.

You can see that same choice, derived from the same ideology, across multiple fields. During the height of the (continuing, mutating) COVID pandemic, many Republican politicians and their

avored constituents rebelled against vaccine and mask mandates to mitigate the spread of a highly contagious virus. Why should I wear a mask to reduce a lethal threat to an immunocompromised neighbor? Don't tread on me. Indeed, some anti-mask fanatics responded violently to a temporary social compact to protect their neighbors (and themselves) in an emergency. Such resistance was accompanied by a widespread, wholly pathological, denial that COVID was even real. Predictably, after the introduction of vaccines, higher death rates from COVID ensued in Republican precincts.

As climate change imposes increasingly deadly consequences in the U.S. and across the globe, Republicans once again not only tolerate but privilege the killers, fossil fuels. Donald Trump is unintelligible when he discusses wind turbines, which he apparently believes are failing to power someone's television set somewhere. But through his dystopian dreamscape, the GOP presidential nominee makes his hostility to clean energy, and its life-saving potential to mitigate climate catastrophe, very clear. (There is, of course, a typically Trumpian emphasis on self-interest, as well. In spring, Trump solicited \$1 billion in political contributions from oil executives while pledging, quid pro quo, to free them from regulations.)

Such Republican choices are repeated over and over as ideology calcifies into habit. Rather than safeguard the U.S. Treasury, the collective assets of the nation, and require individuals and corporations to pay their legally designated share, Republicans demand that Internal Revenue Service agents be fired and disempowered. Just as they privilege the individual polluter over the collective environment, Republicans privilege the individual tax cheat over the collective purse.

Gun-rights extremism is perhaps the most obvious vector of an ideology that began veering into pathology even before the GOP nominated Trump, a convicted criminal described as “unfit” by much of his own cabinet and White House staff, for president a second and then a fantastical third time. Much first-level gun-violence prevention is the equivalent of low-hanging policy fruit. Universal background checks. Safe-storage laws. Red-flag

By **FRANCIS WILKINSON**

Bloomberg Opinion

Francis Wilkinson is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist covering U.S. politics and policy. Previously, he was executive editor for the Week and a writer for Rolling Stone.



laws to enable authorities to remove firearms from certifiably dangerous individuals. No permitless carry. But to many in the clutches of nihilism, even minor safeguards to protect human life appear excessive.

Trump evinces such hatred for 21st century pluralistic America—for its people, its values, its folkways, its ambitions—that it's perhaps unsurprising to see nihilism so firmly rooted among his tribe. When the Giffords Law Center awarded Georgia an “F” grade for its slapdash gun policies, the state's Republican governor, Brian Kemp, responded on social media: “I'll wear this ‘F’ as a badge of honor. Our 2nd Amendment is sacred, and I'll never back down from defending Georgians' constitutional rights.” His defense is a success: The firearm death rate in Georgia is almost 4 times higher than in New York.

Jingoism and bluster are time-honored substitutes for patriotism and decency, just as demagoguery makes a handy camouflage for cowardice. In the days ahead, we'll learn more details of the shooting at Apalachee High School. What menu of weaponry was made accessible to a disturbed boy? Which adult failed at which moment? Yet how much can such details really matter? As long as the nation is subject to the nihilism of men who choose death over responsibility, and individual pathology over collective freedom, the slaughter will continue across a landscape disfigured by moral collapse.

Will Trump ever be tried for Jan. 6? Here's the answer that emerged from the latest hearing

Much remained uncertain after Thursday's hearing on how to proceed with the federal Jan. 6 case against Donald Trump following the Supreme Court's immunity ruling. But one point seemed clear: It's not going to trial anytime soon.

The parties and U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan agreed that, as the judge put it, “the issue of immunity will stop these proceedings once again.”

The judge's forlorn prediction is a safe one given the Supreme Court's Delphic opinion and the Justice Department's subsequent superseding indictment in the case.

The new indictment, filed by special counsel Jack Smith last week, excises much of the evidence that the Supreme Court barred from being raised because it relates to conduct that enjoys absolute immunity. In particular, it deletes an entire chapter involving Trump's effort to get the Department of Justice to falsely tell Georgia officials that it had detected fraud in the state's vote, which Joe Biden won narrowly. The superseding indictment also omits evidence involving Trump's discussions with the staff of the White House counsel's office.

Smith's team recast the indictment as a narrative about Trump the candidate—a private citizen not draped in any official authority. But the government opted to retain some crucial evidence from Trump's interactions with subordinates, namely his vicious browbeating of Vice President Mike Pence in an effort to get him to block electoral votes for Biden on Jan. 6, 2021. The special counsel must have concluded that the evidence was so important that he was ready to accept the risk and delay that come with further Supreme Court review.

The justices' opinion clearly regards discussions between the president and vice president as “presumptively immune.” Smith can overcome that presumption by showing that such evidence would not infringe, in the court's words, “on the authority and functions of the executive branch.”

What that means in practical terms is anybody's guess. So

is the critical question of burden of proof—whether Smith must show the case won't intrude on executive authority by a preponderance of the evidence, for example, or beyond a reasonable doubt. The court doesn't say, leaving those questions for Chutkan to answer, with a high risk of reversal if she guesses wrong. Trump lawyer John Lauro's sardonic aside that the court's direction was “clear” provoked laughter in the courtroom.

The Justice Department is presumably relying on a hint dropped in the immunity opinion by Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. as to whether interactions between Trump and Pence concern the “authority and functions of the executive branch.” Roberts noted Pence's dual constitutional role as both an executive official and the Senate president. Pence presided over a joint session of Congress to certify the election on Jan. 6, 2021, acting in a legislative rather than executive capacity.

But the court's hint was far short of an assurance. The most damning conversations between Trump and Pence took place in the Oval Office before the congressional proceeding. Smith will have to argue that scrutinizing those nasty tête-à-têtes would not infringe on executive authority.

Even if Chutkan agrees, the question will likely necessitate a trip back to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit as well as the Supreme Court. Lauro, for his part, made it clear that Trump's team will argue that the presentation of evidence of the Pence-Trump discussions to the latest grand jury requires dismissal of the charges under the Supreme Court's opinion.

Given that the Pence evidence is just the first of many headaches the justices bequeathed to Chutkan, the government argued that the district judge should decide all the immunity questions first. That would mean just one more appellate interruption in the case rather than a series of trips through the federal courts to decide separate immunity issues.

Lauro argued that Chutkan should first resolve basic objections to the superseding indictment, including a new defense

By **HARRY LITMAN**

Los Angeles Times

Harry Litman is the host of the “Talking Feds” podcast and the “Talking San Diego” speaker series.



argument picking up on U.S. District Judge Aileen Cannon's dismissal of the classified documents case. Chutkan responded that she didn't find Cannon's ruling that the special counsel was improperly appointed “particularly persuasive”—an understatement of the consensus that it was wildly off base.

Chutkan seemed unlikely to accept Trump's invitation to handle other arguments first, saying, “Immunity is the linchpin here.” She also rejected Lauro's argument that the superseding indictment amounts to a completely new case, saying, “It's not more stuff, it's less.”

Lauro eventually acknowledged Trump's political motivations, arguing that the immunity issue shouldn't be considered at this “sensitive time”—that is, before the election. “We are talking about the presidency of the United States,” Trump's attorney protested.

Chutkan had a ready response: “I'm not talking about the presidency. I'm talking about a four-count indictment.”

In an order last Thursday, the judge set deadlines for filings on immunity and other issues through the end of October, largely rejecting the defense's efforts to slow the case further. That will bring the pretrial proceedings to the eve of the election.

Chutkan's frustration was evident when she ended the hearing by noting that it “would be an exercise in futility” to set a new trial date only to be interrupted by further appeals.

The upshot for what was once the most important and likely attempt to bring Trump to justice is discouraging. Thanks to the nation's highest court, a trial many observers hoped to see unfold before the election is not likely to happen until 2026 or later—if it takes place at all.

KEEPING

From page 6

Endless war in Gaza will further endanger Israel. It will put at risk the existing peace treaties with Jordan and Egypt (keeping troops on Philadelphia violates an Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty). It will fuel the escalating war with Hezbollah and tempt Iran to further destabilize the region.

“Arab peace partners will be forced to distance themselves,”

predicted Nimrod Novik, a member of the executive committee of Commanders for Israel's Security with longtime close contacts with Egyptian, Saudi, and Jordanian security circles. “Normalization with Saudi Arabia will be sent to the file of lost opportunities. We're going to see the West Bank sliding in the direction of Gaza.”

“I've never been more worried about the trajectory of Israel,” he told me.






And contrary to Netanyahu's claims, the failure of the hostage/cease-fire deal will ensure that most, if not all, of the re-

maining hostages die.

This is why the demonstrations by hostage families and supporters are so frenzied, so emotional, so desperate. They know their loved ones are being sacrificed, not for Israel's security needs, but for the political needs of their prime minister.

This name Philadelphia, meaning “brotherly love,” was probably meant as a black joke when it was bestowed by Israeli soldiers on this accursed sand spit in 2006 as they withdrew from Gaza. Given Netanyahu's misuse of the corridor for his own interests, it should be renamed Philadelphia-lies.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY	
									
Very windy. Cloudy with widespread rain, frequent locally heavy showers and scattered thunderstorms. south winds 25 to 35 mph.		Breezy. Cloudy with widespread rain, frequent locally heavy showers and scattered thunderstorms.		Cloudy with widespread rain, frequent locally heavy showers and scattered thunderstorms.		Cloudy with frequent locally heavy showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.		Cloudy with frequent locally heavy showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.	
83°	77°	83°	77°	83°	77°	83°	77°	83°	77°



PICTURE TIME: 7:31 AM TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2024

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite shows cloudy skies and active convection moving through the Marianas Waters this morning. The buoys reveal combined seas of 6 to 8 feet which are composed of east-northeast swell and wind waves. As Invest 95W approaches then moves past the Marianas, it is expected to strengthen. Combined seas are expected to rise, possibly peaking at 13 feet in the Wednesday through Thursday time frame, then gradually diminish through the weekend, subsiding below hazardous levels by Friday.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: <https://www.weather.gov/gum/>

MICRONESIA			▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy/Wind	86° / 76°	
Palau	Heavy Rain Shower	87° / 78°	
Yap	Cloudy	87° / 79°	
Chuuk	Cloudy	86° / 77°	
Pohnpei	Cloudy	87° / 76°	
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	89° / 79°	
Majuro	Light Rain	84° / 81°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:05 AM	6:21 PM
Thursday	6:05 AM	6:20 PM
Friday	6:05 AM	6:20 PM
Saturday	6:05 AM	6:19 PM
Sunday	6:05 AM	6:18 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	12:29 PM	11:47 PM	-
Thursday	1:27 PM	-	-
Friday	-	12:44 AM	2:24 PM
Saturday	-	1:45 AM	3:19 PM
Sunday	-	2:47 AM	4:10 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Rain	61° / 50°	
Beijing	Fair	75° / 71°	
Hong Kong	Fair	88° / 78°	
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	88° / 76°	
London	Sunny	77° / 54°	
Los Angeles	Sunny	101° / 77°	
Manila	Partly Cloudy	87° / 80°	
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	57° / 36°	
Miami	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°	
New York	Cloudy	76° / 56°	
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	97° / 82°	
Paris	Showers	73° / 57°	
Busan	Showers	84° / 72°	
Rome	Sunny	95° / 70°	
Salem	Cloudy	89° / 71°	
San Francisco	Sunny	69° / 56°	
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	92° / 76°	
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	92° / 78°	
Washington, DC	Clear	79° / 53°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
7:01 AM	Low Tide	0.22	
2:55 PM	High Tide	1.57	
7:29 PM	Low Tide	1.39	
11:58 PM	High Tide	1.61	

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF AUGUST 18, 2024

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA076	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily	UA174	8:00AM	8:50AM	Daily
SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
UA824	11:50AM	2:25PM	1, 3, 5	UA825	5:30PM	9:55PM	2, 4, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily	UA184	10:25PM	4:20AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA193	6:50PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau	UA192	10:25PM	6:15AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:10PM	9:10PM	Daily	PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	Daily
				UA184	11:50PM	5:45AM+1	2, 5
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
7C3403/2305	4:45AM	10:20PM	Daily	UA192/174	10:25PM	8:50AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA076/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam	UA184/174	10:25PM	8:50AM +1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via Guam
UA076/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau	7C2306/3406	11:10PM	3:10PM+1	Daily
				UA184/174	11:50PM	8:50AM +1	2, 5 via Guam
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily	7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily	7C3472	11:05AM	4:40PM	Daily (July 17 to Aug 17)
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily	TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily
				7C3404	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
HX77	4:05AM	7:00AM	1, 5	HX76	7:25PM	2:35AM+1	4, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 2, 2024

SAIPAN TO ROTA					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	SAIPAN	ROTA	08:30	09:00	Daily
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	10:30	11:00	Daily
1303	SAIPAN	ROTA	15:30	16:00	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	ROTA	SAIPAN	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	11:30	12:00	Saturday & Sunday
3103	ROTA	SAIPAN	13:30	14:00	Monday To Friday
3104	ROTA	SAIPAN	16:30	17:00	Daily
ROTA TO GUAM					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	ROTA	GUAM	11:30	12:00	Monday To Friday
GUAM TO ROTA					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	GUAM	ROTA	12:30	13:00	Monday To Friday
SAIPAN TO TINIAN					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1201	SAIPAN	TINIAN	7:30	7:45	Daily
1202	SAIPAN	TINIAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	SAIPAN	TINIAN	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	SAIPAN	TINIAN	10:00	10:15	Daily
1206	SAIPAN	TINIAN	14:00	14:15	Daily
1207	SAIPAN	TINIAN	15:00	15:15	Daily
1208	SAIPAN	TINIAN	16:00	16:15	Daily
1209	SAIPAN	TINIAN	17:00	17:15	Daily
TINIAN TO SAIPAN					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2101	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
2102	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	TINIAN	SAIPAN	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	TINIAN	SAIPAN	10:30	10:45	Daily
2106	TINIAN	SAIPAN	14:30	14:45	Daily
2107	TINIAN	SAIPAN	15:30	15:45	Daily
2108	TINIAN	SAIPAN	16:30	16:45	Daily
2109	TINIAN	SAIPAN	17:30	17:45	Daily

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Business

BPD launches subgrants for BEAD infrastructure projects

By **RACQUEL H. FLOYD**
 raxfloyd@gmail.com
 CORRESPONDENT

CNMI Broadband Policy and Development said it's now transitioning to the exciting subgrant selection process for infrastructure projects after completed 10 milestones for the Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment program.

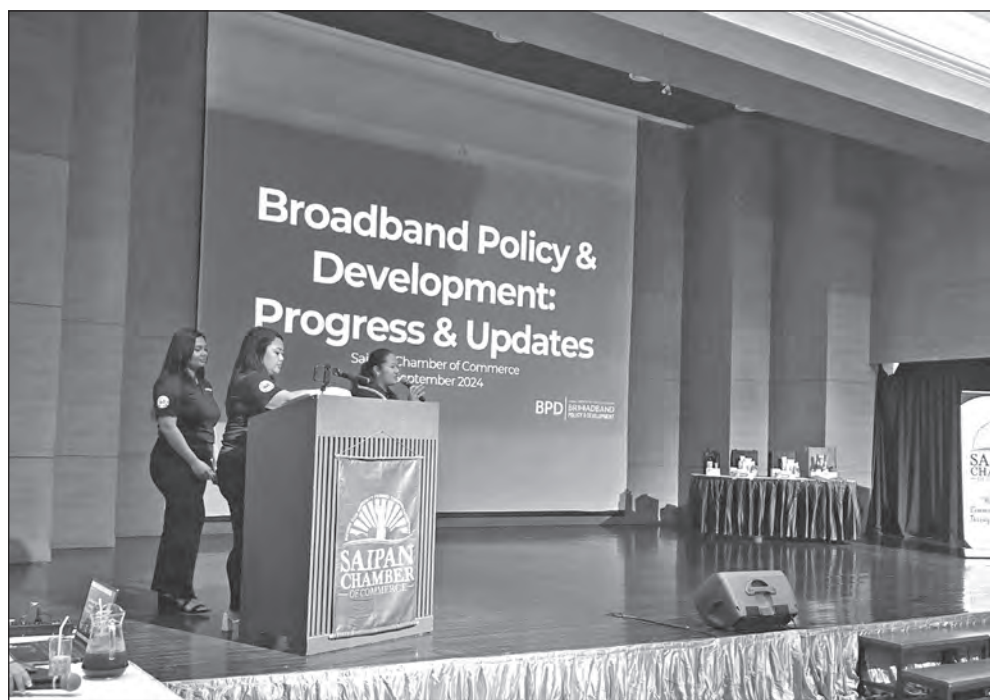
"We are currently drafting our subgrant application packet and we've got to launch the process in October," said BPD outreach coordinator Krissa Deleon Guerrero during last Wednesday's Saipan Chamber of Commerce general membership meeting at Saipan World Resort's Taga Hall.

Guerrero added that public notice was issued to inform everyone and one-on-one sessions will be offered to clarify requirements. She also said that the application process will be open for 45 days.

According to Guerrero, the bid aims to provide high-quality broadband access to every corner of CNMI.

"Our goal is to ensure that the subgrant selection is transparent and fair to bring high-quality broadband access to every corner of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota," said Guerrero.

A panel will review the submitted application based on feasibility and the applicant's capacity to deliver. The project has a four-year completion



timeline for awarded applicants.

Guerrero also announced the launch of the governor's broadband weekend, which aims to train residents to build a high-speed fiber network across CNMI.

Over \$3 million of the \$80-million BEAD funding will support the program, management, training materials, and living stipends for training. The goal is to develop a skilled local workforce and deploy underground fiber to over 10,000 homes and businesses.

Guerrero mentioned that they launched a six-month training program in October, providing up to 300 train-

ees and will collaborate with Northern Marianas College, Northern Marianas Technical Institute, Island Training Solutions, and the Department of Labor to develop a curriculum that includes hands-on training and classroom instruc-

tion. The goal is to equip local residents with the necessary skills for active participation in community development.

Meanwhile, BPD equity outreach specialist De Faustina Camacho discussed the Digital Equity Act Programs

RACQUEL FLOYD
 CNMI Broadband Policy and Development's Dayna Lou Macaranas, third from left, provides an overview of BPD's progress and updates during the Saipan Chamber of Commerce general membership meeting last Wednesday at Saipan World Resort's Taga Hall. Standing on stage with Macaranas are BPD outreach coordinator Krissa Deleon Guerrero and BPD equity outreach specialist De Faustina Camacho.

and highlighted that the National Telecommunication and Information Administration offered three key digital grant programs—State Digital Equity Planning Grant with \$60 million, Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program with \$1.44 billion, and Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program with \$1.25 billion.

Camacho reported that the planning grant was listed to the CNMI in May 2023, while the State Capacity Grant program application was submitted in July 2024

and is currently awaiting approval and expects results by the end of this year.

According to Camacho, the BPD was established in April 2023 and the Digital Equity Planning grant was awarded the following month in May 2023.

She added that throughout the following months, they have developed the five-year plan which was approved by NTIA in July 2024, while a notice of funding opportunity was issued in August 2024 for the Competitive Grant Program.

Camacho explained the purpose of the competitive grant program, which is to support the efforts to achieve digital equity, promote regional inclusion activities, and spur greater adoption of broadband among covered populations. She added the importance of the program eligibility extensions beyond state private offices to various entities including state agencies, educational institutions, and community organizations.

Apple embraces the AI craze with its newly unleashed iPhone 16 lineup

CUPERTINO, Calif. (AP)—Apple on Monday charged into the artificial intelligence craze with a new iPhone lineup that marks the company's latest attempt to latch onto a technology trend and transform it into a cultural phenomenon.

The four different iPhone 16 models will all come equipped with special chips needed to power a suite of AI tools that Apple hopes will make its marquee product even more indispensable and reverse a recent sales slump.

Apple's AI features are designed to turn its often-blundering virtual assistant Siri into a smarter and more versatile sidekick, automate a wide range of tedious tasks and pull off other crowd-pleasing tricks such as creating customized emojis within seconds.

After receiving a standing ovation for Monday's event, Apple CEO Tim Cook promised the AI package will unleash "innovations that will make a true difference in people's lives."

But the breakthroughs won't begin as soon as the new iPhones—ranging in price from \$800 to \$1,200—hit the stores on September 20.

Most of Apple's AI functions will roll out as part of a free software updates to iOS 18, the operating system that will power the iPhone 16 rolling out from October through December. U.S. English will



The new iPhone 16 is displayed during an announcement of new products at Apple headquarters Monday, Sept. 9, 2024, in Cupertino, Calif.

be the featured language at launch but an update enabling other languages will come out next year, according to Apple.

It's all part of a new approach that Apple previewed at a developers conference three months ago to create more anticipation for a next generation of iPhones amid a rare sales slump for the well-known devices.

Since Apple's June conference, competitors such as Samsung and Google have made greater strides in AI—a technology widely expected to trigger the most dramatic changes in computing since the first iPhone came out 17 years ago.

Just as Apple elevated fledgling smartphones it into a must-have technology in 21st-century society, the Cupertino, California, company is betting it can do something similar with its tardy arrival to arti-

cial intelligence.

In an attempt to set itself apart from the early leaders in AI, the technology being baked into the iPhone 16 is being promoted as "Apple Intelligence." Despite the unique branding, Apple's new approach mimics many of the features already available in the Samsung Galaxy S24 released in January and the Google Pixel 9 that came out last month.

"Apple could have waited another year for further development, but initial take up of AI-powered devices from the likes of Samsung has been encouraging, and Apple is keen to capitalize on this market," said PP Foresight analyst Paolo Pescatore.

As it treads into new territory, Apple is trying to preserve its long-time commitment to privacy by tailoring its AI so

that most of its technological tricks can be processed on the device itself instead of relying on giant banks of computers located in remote data centers. When a task needs to connect to a data center, Apple promises it will be done in a tightly-controlled way that ensures that no personal data is stored remotely.

While corralling the personal information shared through Apple's AI tools inherently reduces the chances that the data will be exploited or misused against a user's wishes, it doesn't guarantee iron-clad security. A device could still be stolen, for instance, or hacked through digital chicanery.

For users seeking to access even more AI tools than being offered by the iPhone, Apple is teaming up with OpenAI to give users the option of farming out more complicated tasks to the popular ChatGPT chatbot.

Although Apple is releasing a free version of its operating system to propel its on-device AI features, the chip needed to run the technology is only available on the iPhone 16 lineup and the high-end iPhone 15 models that came out a year ago.

That means most consumers who are interested in taking advantage of Apple's approach to AI will have to buy one of the iPhone 16 models—a twist that investors are counting on will fuel a surge in demand heading into the holiday season.

FBI: Americans lost \$5.6B last year in cryptocurrency fraud scams

WASHINGTON (AP)—Americans were duped out of more than \$5.6 billion last year through fraud schemes involving cryptocurrency, the FBI said in a report released Monday that shows a 45% jump in losses from 2022.

The FBI received nearly 70,000 complaints in 2023 by victims of financial fraud involving bitcoin, ether and other cryptocurrencies, according to the FBI. The most rampant scheme was investment fraud, which accounted for \$3.96 billion of the losses.

"The decentralized nature of cryptocurrency, the speed of irreversible transactions, and the ability to transfer value around the world make cryptocurrency an attractive vehicle for criminals, while creating challenges to recover stolen funds," wrote Michael Nordwall, assistant director of the FBI's criminal

investigative division.

Scammers will often make contact through dating apps or social media to build trust over several weeks or months before suggesting cryptocurrency investing, the FBI said. Once the relationship is built, they convince the targets to use fake websites or apps to invest their money, sometimes even allowing the victims to withdraw small amounts of money early on to make it seem legitimate.

In some cases, those victims are then targeted by bogus businesses claiming they will help the victim recover the cryptocurrency they lost, according to the FBI.

FBI officials say Americans of all ages can be a target of such scams, and should be extremely cautious when presented with investment opportunities from people they've never met in real life.

World

Robot begins removal of melted fuel from Fukushima nuclear plant

TOKYO (AP)—A long robot entered a damaged reactor at Japan's Fukushima nuclear power plant on Tuesday, beginning a two-week, high-stakes mission to retrieve for the first time a tiny amount of melted fuel debris from the bottom.

The robot's trip into the Unit 2 reactor is a crucial initial step for what comes next—a daunting, decades-long process to decommission the plant and deal with large amounts of highly radioactive melted fuel inside three reactors that were damaged by a massive earthquake and tsunami in 2011. Specialists hope the robot will help them learn more about the status of the cores and the fuel debris.

Here is an explanation of how the robot works, its mission, significance and what lies ahead as the most challenging phase of the reactor cleanup begins.

What is the fuel debris?

Nuclear fuel in the reactor cores melted after the magnitude 9.0 earthquake and tsunami in March 2011 caused the

Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant's cooling systems to fail. The melted fuel dripped down from the cores and mixed with internal reactor materials such as zirconium, stainless steel, electrical cables, broken grates and concrete around the supporting structure and at the bottom of the primary containment vessels.

The reactor meltdowns caused the highly radioactive, lava-like material to spatter in all directions, greatly complicating the cleanup. The condition of the debris also differs in each reactor.

Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings, or TEPCO, which manages the plant, says an estimated 880 tons of molten fuel debris remains in the three reactors, but some experts say the amount could be larger.

What is the robot's mission?

Workers will use five 1.5-meter-long (5-foot-long) pipes connected in sequence to maneuver the robot through an entry point in the Unit 2 reactor's primary containment vessel. The robot itself can extend

about 6 meters (20 feet) inside the vessel. Once inside, it will be maneuvered remotely by operators at another building at the plant because of the fatally high radiation emitted by the melted debris.

The front of the robot, equipped with tongs, a light and a camera, will be lowered by a cable to a mound of melted fuel debris. It will then snip off and collect a bit of the debris—less than 3 grams (0.1 ounce). The small amount is meant to minimize radiation dangers.

The robot will then back out to the place it entered the reactor, a roundtrip journey that will take about two weeks.

The mission takes that long because the robot must make extremely precise maneuvers to avoid hitting obstacles or getting stuck in passageways. That has happened to earlier robots.

TEPCO is also limiting daily operations to two hours to minimize the radiation risk for workers in the reactor building. Eight six-member teams will take turns, with each group allowed to stay maximum of about 15 minutes.

What do officials hope to learn?

Sampling the melted fuel debris is "an important first step," said Lake Barrett, who led the cleanup after the 1979 disaster at the U.S. Three Mile Island nuclear plant for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and is now a paid adviser for TEPCO's Fukushima decommissioning.

While the melted fuel debris has been kept cool and has stabilized, the aging of the reactors poses potential safety risks, and the melted fuel needs to be removed and relocated to a safer place for long-term storage as soon as possible, experts say.

An understanding of the melted fuel debris is essential to determine how best to remove it, store it and dispose of it, according to the Japan Atomic Energy Agency.

Experts expect the sample will also provide more clues about how exactly the meltdown 13 years ago played out, some of which is still a mystery.

The melted fuel sample will be kept in secure canisters and sent to multiple laboratories

for more detailed analysis. If the radiation level exceeds a set limit, the robot will take the sample back into the reactor.

"It's the start of a process. It's a long, long road ahead," Barrett said in an online interview. "The goal is to remove the highly radioactive material, put it into engineered canisters ... and put those in storage."

For this mission, the robot's small tong can only reach the upper surface of the debris. The pace of the work is expected to pick up in the future as more experience is gained and robots with additional capabilities are developed.

What's next?

TEPCO will have to "probe down into the debris pile, which is over a meter (3.3 feet) thick, so you have to go down and see what's inside," Barrett said, noting that at Three Mile Island, the debris on the surface was very different from the material deeper inside. He said multiple samples from different locations must be collected and analyzed to better understand the melted debris and develop necessary equipment, such as stronger robots for future larger-scale removal.

Compared to collecting a tiny sample for analysis, it will be a more difficult challenge to develop and operate robots that can cut larger chunks of melted debris into pieces and put that material into canisters for safe storage.

There are also two other

damaged reactors, Unit 1 and Unit 3, which are in worse condition and will take even longer to deal with. TEPCO plans to deploy a set of small drones in Unit 1 for a probe later this year and is developing even smaller "micro" drones for Unit 3, which is filled with a larger amount of water.

Separately, hundreds of spent fuel rods remain in unenclosed cooling pools on the top floor of both Unit 1 and 2. This is a potential safety risk if there's another major quake. Removal of spent fuel rods has been completed at Unit 3.

When will the decommissioning be finished?

Removal of the melted fuel was initially planned to start in late 2021 but has been delayed by technical issues, underscoring the difficulty of the process. The government says decommissioning is expected to take 30-40 years, while some experts say it could take as long as 100 years.

Others are pushing for an entombment of the plant, as at Chernobyl after its 1986 explosion, to reduce radiation levels and risks for plant workers.

That won't work at the seaside Fukushima plant, Barrett says.

"You're in a high seismic area, you're in a high-water area, and there are a lot of unknowns in those (reactor) buildings," he said. "I don't think you can just entomb it and wait."

Israeli missile strike on Gaza humanitarian area kills at least 40 people, Palestinians say

JERUSALEM (AP)—An Israeli strike on an area in the Gaza Strip home to Palestinians displaced by the Israel-Hamas war killed at least 40 people and wounded 60 others, authorities said Tuesday.

The Palestinian news agency WAFA reported the toll for the strike, citing medical officials, and suggested the figures could change.

Details about the strike in the Mawasi coastal community just west of Khan Younis that the Israeli military has designated as a humanitarian zone remained unclear. The area is home to many Palestinians displaced by the Israel-Hamas war in which the Israeli military has devastated the wider Gaza Strip after Hamas' Oct. 7 attack on Israel.

The Israeli military described the strike as hitting

"significant Hamas terrorists who were operating within a command-and-control center," without immediately providing additional evidence.

Hamas in a reported statement denied that, though Israel long has accused Hamas and other militants of hiding in civilian populations. Israel has launched strikes in and around Mawasi in the past, even as hundreds of thousands of Palestinians now live there.

Footage circulating on social media showed deep craters at the site of the attack, the strewn ruins around it covered in shredded tents, a bicycle and other debris. Rescue workers used shovels to shift through the sand. Bystanders used their hands to dig, illuminated by mobile phone light. At least one crater at the site looked to be as deep as 10 meters (32 feet).

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Life & Style

James Earl Jones, voice of Darth Vader, dies at 93

NEW YORK (AP)—James Earl Jones, who overcame racial prejudice and a severe stutter to become a celebrated icon of stage and screen—eventually lending his deep, commanding voice to CNN, “The Lion King” and Darth Vader—has died. He was 93.

His agent, Barry McPherson, confirmed Jones died Monday morning at home in New York’s Hudson Valley region. The cause was not immediately clear.

The pioneering Jones, who in 1965 became one of the first African American actors in a continuing role on a daytime drama (“As the World Turns”) and worked deep into his 80s, won two Emmys, a Golden Globe, two Tony Awards, a Grammy, the National Medal of Arts and the Kennedy Center Honors. He was also given an honorary Oscar and a special Tony for lifetime achievement. In 2022, a Broadway theater was renamed in his honor.

He cut an elegant figure late in life, with a wry sense of humor and a ferocious work habit. In 2015, he arrived at rehearsals for a Broadway run of “The Gin Game” having already memorized the play and with notebooks filled with comments from the creative team. He said he was always in service of the work.

“The need to storytell has always been with us,” he told The Associated Press then. “I think it first happened around campfires when the man came home and told his family he got the bear, the bear didn’t get him.”

Jones created such memo-

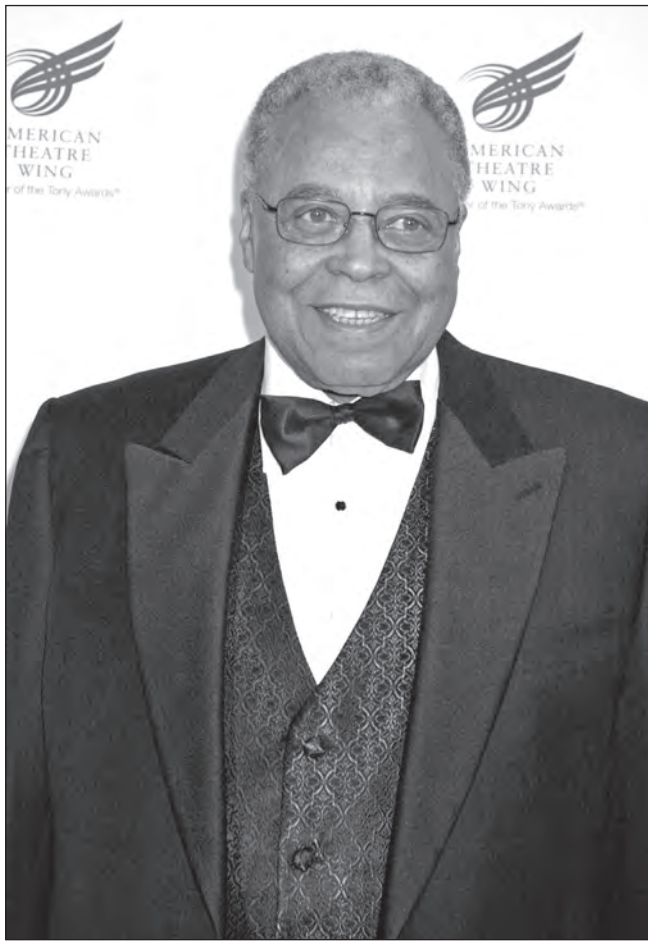
rable film roles as the reclusive writer coaxed back into the spotlight in “Field of Dreams,” the boxer Jack Johnson in the stage and screen hit “The Great White Hope,” the writer Alex Haley in “Roots: The Next Generation” and a South African minister in “Cry, the Beloved Country.”

He was also a sought-after voice actor, expressing the villainy of Darth Vader (“No, I am your father,” commonly misremembered as “Luke, I am your father”), as well as the benign dignity of King Mufasa in both the 1994 and 2019 versions of Disney’s “The Lion King” and announcing “This is CNN” during station breaks. He won a 1977 Grammy for his performance on the “Great American Documents” audiobook.

“If you were an actor or aspired to be an actor, if you pounded the pavement in these streets looking for jobs, one of the standards we always had was to be a James Earl Jones,” Samuel L. Jackson once said.

Some of his other films include “Dr. Strangelove,” “The Greatest” (with Muhammad Ali), “Conan the Barbarian,” “Three Fugitives” and playing an admiral in three blockbuster Tom Clancy adaptations—“The Hunt for Red October,” “Patriot Games” and “Clear and Present Danger.” In a rare romantic comedy, “Claudine,” Jones had an onscreen love affair with Diahann Carroll.

LeVar Burton, who starred alongside Jones in the TV movie “Guyana Tragedy: The Story of Jim Jones,” paid tribute on X, writing, “There will



James Earl Jones arrives at the American Theatre Wing benefit to honor CBS and Leslie Moonves, Chairman of CBS, Monday, April 11, 2005, in New York.

never be another of his particular combination of graces.”

Jones made his Broadway debut in 1958’s “Sunrise At Campobello” and would win his two Tony Awards for “The Great White Hope” (1969) and “Fences” (1987). He also was nominated for “On Golden Pond” (2005) and “Gore Vidal’s The Best Man” (2012). He was celebrated for his command of Shakespeare and Athol Fugard alike. More

recent Broadway appearances include “Cat on a Hot Tin Roof,” “Driving Miss Daisy,” “The Iceman Cometh,” and “You Can’t Take It With You.”

As a rising stage and television actor, he performed with the New York Shakespeare Festival Theater in “Othello,” “Macbeth” and “King Lear” and in off-Broadway plays.

Jones was born by the light of an oil lamp in a shack in Arkabutla, Mississippi, on

Jan. 17, 1931. His father, Robert Earl Jones, had deserted his wife before the baby’s arrival to pursue life as a boxer and, later, an actor.

When Jones was 6, his mother took him to her parents’ farm near Manistee, Michigan. His grandparents adopted the boy and raised him.

“A world ended for me, the safe world of childhood,” Jones wrote in his autobiography, “Voices and Silences.” “The move from Mississippi to Michigan was supposed to be a glorious event. For me it was a heartbreak, and not long

after, I began to stutter.”

Too embarrassed to speak, he remained virtually mute for years, communicating with teachers and fellow students with handwritten notes. A sympathetic high school teacher, Donald Crouch, learned that the boy wrote poetry, and demanded that Jones read one of his poems aloud in class. He did so faultlessly.

Teacher and student worked together to restore the boy’s normal speech. “I could not get enough of speaking, debating, orating—acting,” he recalled in his book.

Weinstein taken to NYC hospital for emergency heart surgery

NEW YORK (AP)—Jailed ex-movie mogul Harvey Weinstein underwent an emergency medical procedure at a New York City hospital on Monday to remove fluid on his heart and lungs after he complained of chest pains over the weekend, his representatives said.

Weinstein, 72, was rushed to Bellevue Hospital in Manhattan from the Rikers Island jail complex late Sunday “due to severe medical conditions,” his publicist Juda Engelmayer and prison consultant Craig Rothfeld said.

“We can confirm that Mr. Weinstein had a procedure and surgery on his heart today,” Engelmayer and Rothfeld said. Weinstein was out of surgery as of Monday afternoon and is in recovery, they said.

Weinstein’s lawyer, Arthur Aidala, said they requested that jail officials immediately move Weinstein to Bellevue “based on his complaints to us regarding chest pains.” In one email, Aidala said, he told them: “This guy is going to die on your watch if you don’t do something.”

News of Weinstein’s hospitalization was first reported by ABC News.

Weinstein has been in an out of Bellevue Hospital since returning to Rikers Island from state prison in April after an appeals court overturned his 2020 rape and sexual assault convictions and ordered a new trial.

In July, he was hospitalized with COVID-19 and pneumonia in both lungs, his representatives said.

Woman’s unorthodox romance has unintended consequence

DEAR ABBY: A close male friend, “Will,” ended our friendship without warning. I didn’t know he had such strong feelings about my current arrangement. I have been dating a married man, “Bart,” whose wife suggested he get himself a girlfriend if he wanted sex/intimacy/companionship. She also told him she would “never want to sleep with him again.” It has been 10 years since they were last intimate or even shared a bed. They don’t live together; Bart lives in his guest house. They share a son, which is why he doesn’t want to leave.

As a parent, I understand. It’s why I stayed in my own marriage for so long. The circumstances are less than ideal and something I never thought I’d be a part of, but I haven’t felt this wonderful in years. My ex-husband and I were never this compatible. When I’m with Bart, it’s magical, and I believe it’s mutual.

For this choice of mine, Will has severed our friendship. He did it via text. I’d told him about it two weeks earlier, and he advised me to be careful. He called Bart and me “cheaters,” but it’s not exactly like that. I’m deeply hurt over this loss. I want to know if Will is in the wrong or if I am.

NO CHEATER IN ARIZONA

DEAR NO CHEATER: Does who is “right or wrong” matter at this point? Your friend Will does not approve of

your affair with Bart because of his marital status and has chosen to distance himself. That’s his privilege. You made an adult decision to engage in this relationship, and it has cost you a friend. Live your life, but don’t be shocked if others also feel the way Will does.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I’ve been dating a wonderful guy for the last six months. Our relationship is great, but he has an ex who is much younger than us (a 16-year age gap). He started seeing her while she was pregnant by someone else. He stayed with her until the baby was 3, but, given the circumstances, he continues to get the baby for weekends, etc. He is not on the birth certificate, but the baby knows only him as her dad.

My problem is the ex. She constantly calls or texts him for money or to say she bought things for the little girl. She has called him to come over to hang out, and, most recently, asked him to co-sign for a new car for her.

I’m not OK with the lack of boundaries, and I have said so. He hears me and has told her several times to back off, but she doesn’t listen. It’s causing arguments between us. The child isn’t his actual child, but that fact obviously isn’t changing anything. Should I walk away?

THIRD WHEEL IN THE EAST

DEAR THIRD WHEEL: Your boyfriend is clearly at-

DEAR ABBY

BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



tached to the little girl. You can’t change that, nor should you try. That said, he is still with you in spite of the fact that his ex may be trying to get him (and his financial support) back. Whether you should grit your teeth and tolerate it isn’t something I can answer. Your boyfriend can, however, and whether you should walk away is a question you should be asking him.

■■■

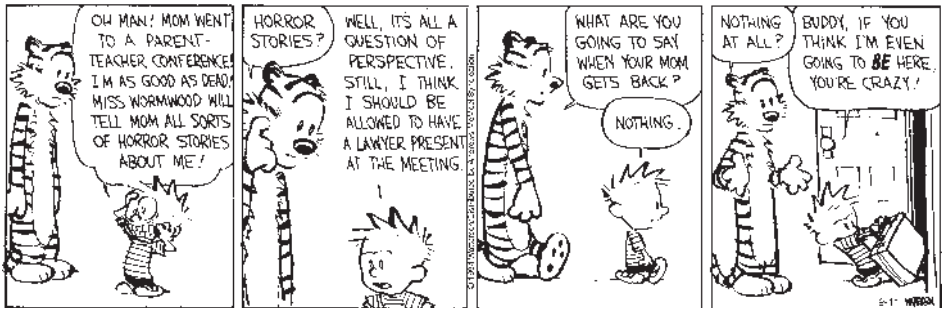
Good advice for everyone—teens to seniors—is in “The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It.” To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

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Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis



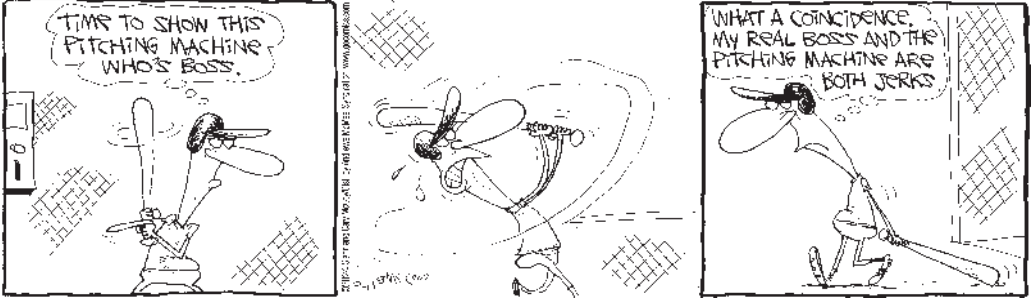
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Scratch the surface?

4 Share

8 Banister

12 Pub drink

13 Gushing review

14 Thompson of "Love Actually"

15 Doctrine

16 James Brown memoir

18 Faithful

20 Arctic explorer John

21 Sweet wine

24 Hogwarts professor

28 Justice Marshall

32 Tea carrier

33 Where Lux. is

34 Asana practitioners

36 Browns, on scoreboards

37 Harvest

39 Fulfilled, with "on"

41 Archipelago part

43 Voice in an iPhone

44 Scot's denial

46 Test for Noah

50 Helping others, volunteering, e.g.

55 Expected

56 Concerning

57 "Yes —?"

58 Jargon suffix

59 Incite

60 Appear

61 NASCAR advertiser

2 To boot

3 "Ratatouille" rat

4 Three-part work

5 U.K. military fliers

6 St. crosser

7 Equal ruler

8 Acting

9 "I love," to Ovid

10 "As I see it," to a texter

11 Young fellow

17 "Viva — Vegas"

19 Earth Day mo.

22 Leeway

23 Roman robes

25 With the bow, musically

26 — Alto, Calif.

27 Ogled

28 Actress Hatcher

29 Colorations

30 Russian river

31 Conn of "Grease"

35 Feudal system

38 Wrote

40 Baseball's Hodges

42 Label

45 Hollywood clashers

47 Praiseful poems

48 Evict

49 Profound

50 Use a shovel

51 Sean — Lennon

52 401(k) alternative

53 Vein contents

54 Inseparable

Solution time: 23 mins.

Yesterday's answer 9-11

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Taraji P. Henson, 54; Harry Connick Jr., 57; Virginia Madsen, 63; Scott Patterson, 66.

Happy Birthday: Take your time. Make choices using reason, facts and research. Be detailed when expressing yourself; leave nothing to someone else's interpretation. Keep your analysis simple, your life less complicated and your connections worthwhile. Life is too short to waste on nonsense. Protect against anyone trying to take advantage of you. Put your energy where it counts, and don't feel guilty for looking out for yourself. Your numbers are 3, 15, 19, 28, 35, 46, 48.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Take charge, and use your energetic attitude to impress and persuade others to participate in your plans. Express yourself with charisma, but don't inflate what you have to offer. Facts and truth matter if you want to maintain a stellar reputation. Personal growth and romance are on the rise. ****

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Changes to how you do business or handle your affairs will pay off. Make your money work for you. A change at work or home that raises your income or lowers your overhead will ease stress and encourage you to pursue what makes you happy. ***

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Keep your records updated. Don't lose sight of what's on your agenda and how much it costs. Focus on health, well-being and doing the best job possible. Leave nothing to chance or up to someone else's jurisdiction. Take the initiative and protect your interests. ***

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Set the bar high and use your intellect, experience and intuition to guide you. You will get back what you put into your pursuits, so don't be

stingy with your time or talents. High energy, flexibility and innovative ideas will lead to opportunity. ***

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Get out, participate, network and gather information to help you get ahead. Connect with people who have as much to contribute as you, and you'll be privy to unique ideas that will encourage you to reset your goals and update your skills. Personal gain looks promising. ****

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Offer your time rather than your cash. Someone will take advantage of you if you let them. It's okay to change your mind or to say no to someone pressuring you. Don't wait until you are exasperated; if you aren't interested in someone or something, say no. **

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): A change will lift your spirits and energy levels. It's time to start something new and to indulge in activities that get you feeling fit and good about how you look and what you have to offer. Travel, education and conversing with forward-thinking people will transform you. ****

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Avoid scams and offers that sound too easy. A reasonable assessment of what's possible will help you change direction and improve your life, not buy into questionable hype. Stick to what you know you can achieve with the skills and experience you offer. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Focus on how you look and feel and what you can do, not the impossible. Opportunity depends on you, so don't look for freebies when input, intelligence and ingenuity are necessary. Rule out and walk away from emotional manipulation and pressure. Rely on yourself, not others. ****

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Pay attention to where every dollar goes. Update documents before penalties are applied. Stay on top of your game and control the outcome of situations that can go for or against you. Don't neglect your health, hygiene or emotional well-being. Be honest in affairs of the heart. ***

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Socializing, networking and showing interest in what others do will lead to profits. Consider safe investments and avoid emotional spending or involvement in joint ventures that aren't sound. Pay attention, be resourceful and focus on personal growth, gain and peace of mind. ***

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Take the path to enlightenment. Let your intuition lead the way, and allow your conscience to be your barometer. Consider ways to make your home user-friendly without going into debt. Sell off items you don't need and clear space for something you want to pursue. **

Birthday Baby: You are smart, responsive and emotional. You are calculating and efficient.

☾: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ☼: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ☼☼: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ☼☼☼: Aim high; start new projects. ☼☼☼☼: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

6 9 2 8 4 1

1 6 5 8

2 5 8

7 1 9

6 4 8 9

8 9 1 3 6

1

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

2 3 6 7 5 9 1 4 8

1 7 8 4 2 3 9 5 6

4 9 5 1 6 8 2 3 7

8 4 9 5 1 2 6 7 3

6 5 1 9 3 7 8 2 4

3 2 7 6 8 4 5 1 9

5 8 2 3 7 6 4 9 1

7 6 4 2 9 1 3 8 5

9 1 3 8 4 5 7 6 2

Difficulty: ★★★ 9/11 ©2012 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

RICHARD SIMMONS (1948-2024) Solution: 10 letters

S S O L T H G I E W R O T C A

F E L G A E T T E S S A C O U

I N S M O T C A R D I O M A D

T O E S L I M Y G R E N E C I

N O X T A E W S E E S A A H O

E B E E I L S H M E V S L D D

S P R I N T C A C H H Y R A U

S N C D A G N C O E A N D E

C O I R E H A A R L N C A R F

I T S T C R E T R O E T I O Y

B L E T A R S I E S H O W L

O I A E T N H L H O S T G S I

R M P U T S E U G O A L U S M

E P O V A R B Y N N H O J A A

A T T I R E R E C U D O R P F

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STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

Pirates beat Marlins 3-2 as Skenes strikes out 9



PITTSBURGH

(AP) — Paul

Skenes struck out nine over six solid innings and the Pittsburgh Pirates edged the Miami Marlins 3-2 on Monday night.

The 22-year-old Skenes (10-2) allowed one run on six hits, lowering his ERA to 2.10. Skenes also boosted his season strikeout total to 151, a Pirates rookie record, while winning his fourth straight decision.

The 6-foot-6 right-hander's fastball hit 100 mph six times while becoming just the fourth rookie ever to reach 150 strikeouts in 20 starts or less, joining Kerry Wood, Dwight Gooden and Mark Prior.

While Skenes wasn't particularly efficient - he needed 98 pitches to record 18 outs and retired Miami in order just once - he was able to avoid major trouble to bolster his bid for National League Rookie of the Year.

Oneil Cruz hit his 19th home of the season for the Pirates. Bryan Reynolds added a two-run double off Valente Bellozo (2-3) as Pittsburgh won its second straight game. Aroldis Chapman worked around a Cristian Pache RBI-double in the ninth to earn his seventh save.

REDS 1, BRAVES 0

ATLANTA (AP)—Nick Martinez pitched seven innings of two-hit ball, Ty France had an RBI double and Cincinnati defeated Atlanta in the makeup of a July rainout.

Atlanta began the night tied with the New York Mets for the last National League wild card. New York was playing at Toronto.

Martinez (8-6) struck out five and held the Braves hitless from the second through the seventh, retiring 17 straight batters in the process. It was the fourth time this season he allowed just two hits in an outing.

Fernando Cruz struck out two in the eighth and Alexis Diaz pitched a flawless ninth for his 27th save in 30 opportunities, completing the two-hitter.

The game was scheduled to make up a July 23 rainout. The Reds won the first two games of that series on July 22 and 24.

A win would have pushed Atlanta to a season-high 14 games over .500. Instead, the Braves dropped to 4-4 in September.

PHILLIES 2, RAYS 1

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Kody Clemens singled with the bases loaded in the bottom of the ninth after Tampa Bay had tied the score in the top of the inning, and Philadelphia won.



Pittsburgh Pirates starting pitcher Paul Skenes delivers during the first inning of a baseball game against the Miami Marlins in Pittsburgh, Monday, Sept. 9, 2024.

Kyle Schwarber homered and Cristopher Sanchez pitched six shutout innings to help NL East-leading Philadelphia begin a six-game homestand with its 48th home victory of the season. The Phillies entered tied with the Dodgers for the most home wins in baseball.

Brandon Lowe hit the tying homer for the Rays, who began play five games out of a wild-card spot in the American League.

Manuel Rodriguez got the first out in the bottom of the ninth before being relieved by Garrett Cleavinger (3-5), who loaded the bases with two outs on a pair of singles and a walk. Clemens lined a 1-0, 95-mph sinker into right field to draw loud "KO-DY! KO-DY!" cheers from the crowd of 39,511.

Carlos Estevez (4-4) blew his fifth save and second in six chances with the Phillies since being acquired prior to the July trade deadline in the top of the inning. Lowe led off the ninth with a drive to deep center. Johan Rojas appeared to make a stellar, leaping catch against the wall in left-center in the deepest part of the park, but the ball popped out of Rojas' glove and over the fence for a home run after his glove hit the top of the outfield wall.

YANKEES 10, ROYALS 4

NEW YORK (AP)—Austin Wells hit a go-ahead three-run homer in the seventh inning

and added an RBI double in the eighth as New York pulled away for a victory over Kansas City and widened their lead in the AL East.

The Yankees surpassed last season's win total and moved 1 1/2 games ahead of the Orioles, who were handed a 12-3 loss in Boston.

Aaron Judge hit a tying single off James McArthur and four pitches later, Wells lifted a 2-1 fastball into the lower rows of the right field bleachers to push New York's lead to 7-4.

The 404-foot drive was Wells' seventh in his last 36 games since July 21 and sixth as New York's cleanup hitter behind Judge.

Hunter Renfroe led off the sixth with a homer to give the Royals a 4-3 lead before the Yankees mounted a rally against McArthur (5-7) and scored the final seven runs of the game.

ANGELS 6, TWINS 2

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Reid Detmers worked six solid innings and Brandon Drury and Niko Kavadas homered to lead Los Angeles to a victory over struggling Minnesota.

Detmers (4-6) was making his second straight quality start after spending three months at Triple-A Salt Lake. The 25-year-old left-hander allowed five hits and struck out eight - including the last three batters he face—for his first win since May 20 against Houston after starting the sea-

son 3-0. He allowed three hits and struck out 10 in six innings in a no-decision against the Los Angeles Dodgers last Tuesday in his first appearance since June 1 after being demoted to the minors after months of inconsistency.

Drury hit his fourth homer of the season, a two-run shot, in the third inning and Kavadas added another two-run homer, his third, in the sixth.

Kyle Farmer homered for the Twins, who struck out 12 times and lost their fourth straight game. Minnesota has scored just 13 runs in losing six of its last seven games. The Twins are 6-15 in their last 21 games, yet remain third in the American League wild-card standings, three games ahead of idle Detroit and Seattle.

David Festa (2-6) allowed a two-run single to Nolan Schanuel in the first and a 459-foot home run to Drury in the third inning as the Angels took a 4-0 lead. Festa was lifted after four innings.

METS 3, BLUE JAYS 2

TORONTO (AP)—Tyrone Taylor scored the tying run on a wild pitch in the eighth inning before fellow pinch-runner Eddy Alvarez dashed home on a passed ball as New York rallied past Toronto for their 10th victory in 11 games.

The surging Mets got six shutout innings of one-hit ball from fill-in starter Tylor Megill, who retired his last 16 batters and matched a season

high with nine strikeouts.

New York bounced back after its nine-game winning streak was snapped Sunday by Cincinnati, moving a game ahead of Atlanta for the final National League wild card. The rival Braves lost 1-0 at home to the Reds in the makeup of a July rainout.

With the Mets trailing 2-1 to begin the eighth against reliever Tommy Nance (0-1), pinch-hitter Jesse Winker drew a walk and was replaced by Taylor.

GUARDIANS 5, WHITE SOX 3

CHICAGO (AP)—Joey Cantillo pitched seven sparkling innings for his first major league win, and Cleveland beat Chicago.

Cantillo was working on a perfect game before Andrew Benintendi grounded a single into right field with two outs in the seventh. Benintendi advanced on a wild pitch and scored on Andrew Vaughn's single, but Corey Lee bounced to third for the final out of the inning.

Cantillo (1-3) struck out a career-high 10 in his fifth start and sixth major league appearance overall. The 24-year-old left-hander, recalled from Triple-A Columbus earlier in the day, stepped into the rotation after Alex Cobb was scratched Saturday because of a blister.

David Fry and Bo Naylor homered for the AL Central-leading Guardians, who had dropped three of four. Steven

Kwan reached three times from the leadoff spot and scored two runs.

It was a franchise-record 13th consecutive home loss and No. 15 in 17 games overall for the lowly White Sox. At 33-112, they are approaching the majors' modern record for most losses - 120 by the 1962 New York Mets in their inaugural season.

RED SOX 12, ORIOLES 3

BOSTON (AP)—Rob Refsnyder homered twice among his four hits and had a career-high five RBIs, Tyler O'Neill also had two homers and Boston beat Baltimore.

Advertisement

Ceddanne Rafaela had two hits and four RBIs as the Red Sox finished with 15 hits.

Refsnyder and O'Neill hit back-to-back homers in both the third and eighth innings. It was Refsnyder's second career multi-homer game and O'Neill's 12th—including his seventh this season to tie Jordan Alvarez for most in the majors. It was the ninth time Boston batters have hit back-to-back homers this season.

Boston starter Brayan Bello (13-7) gave up two runs and three hits in 5 1/3 innings. He walked five, struck out five and hit a batter. Josh Winckowski gave up a run in the final three innings to get his second save of the season.

Orioles left-hander Cade Povich (2-8) allowed four runs and five hits with two walks and five strikeouts in 4 2/3 innings.

CUBS 10, DODGERS 4

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Michael Busch went 4 for 5 with a homer and scored three runs, Cody Bellinger had three RBIs including a two-run homer, and Chicago beat NL West-leading Los Angeles.

The Cubs' offense broke out for 16 hits - with every player getting at least one—coming off a series loss to the AL East-leading New York Yankees in which they had a combined seven hits and two runs in three games.

Bellinger and Busch gave the Cubs a 3-0 lead with two outs in the first inning against their old team.

Bellinger slugged a first-pitch, two-run homer off Walker Buehler (1-5) that also scored Ian Happ, who singled leading off. The ball traveled 430 feet—halfway up the right-field pavilion—and drew cheers from Chicago fans in the crowd of 50,495. Busch added an RBI single.

Busch went deep down the left-field line with two strikes in the fourth, extending Chicago's lead to 4-0.

49ers spoil Aaron Rodgers' return with 32-19 win over Jets



SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP)—Fill-in back Jordan Mason took top billing in a game hyped as Aaron Rodgers' return.

Mason ran for 147 yards and a touchdown in place of the injured Christian McCaffrey and the 49ers spoiled Rodgers' comeback game with a 32-19 victory over the New York Jets on Monday night.

The former undrafted free agent overpowered New York's highly acclaimed defense with his physical running style, helping the Niners score on eight straight drives.

"I thought he runs like he always does," coach Kyle Shanahan said. "When you get him the ball, he breaks tackles, usually gets more than we block for. When we had the good lanes, he always hit them and got a bunch. But, JP was awesome today."

Rodgers threw for 167 yards and one TD and also had an interception exactly 52 weeks to the day after his debut with New York ended with a torn Achilles after four snaps.

Rodgers had problems moving around in the pocket but still showed off the arm that helped him win four MVPs with the Green Bay Packers a few times in his first real action for the Jets.

"I can play better," Rodgers said. "I missed a couple of throws. ... I felt overall I got the ball out pretty good but there were some opportunities I'd like to have back."

Mason made the most of



New York Jets quarterback Aaron Rodgers (8) looks to pass the ball during the first half of an NFL football game against the San Francisco 49ers in Santa Clara, Calif., Monday, Sept. 9, 2024

his opportunities in his first career start. He had just 83 carries his first two seasons but took advantage of being one of the few healthy backs for the Niners this summer to earn a larger role with McCaffrey's sore calf and Achilles still bothering him.

His 28 carries were the most for any Niners player in a regular season game in 13 years as he showed he can handle a full-time load.

"I'm really excited for him," quarterback Brock Purdy said. "He's earned it. He's the kind of guy where it's not given to him. To see him go out and do what he did tonight, I'm so happy for him."

Deebo Samuel added a 2-yard TD run and Jake Moody made a franchise record-tying six field goals to lead the 49ers to the win.

Purdy threw for 231 yards with no touchdowns or turn-

overs against a Jets defense that generated little pressure without holdout edge rusher Haason Reddick.

The Niners took control of the game around halftime. They got a field goal on a 12-play, 75-yard drive at the end of the first half and scored on Mason's 5-yard run on an 11-play, 70-yarder to start the second half. That turned a 13-7 lead into a 23-7 advantage with the Jets getting

only one kneel down snap during that stretch.

"That's a championship outfit, and they introduced us to some championship football," Jets coach Robert Saleh said.

Rodgers then threw an interception on the next drive on a pass to Garrett Wilson that was deflected by Demetrius Flannigan-Fowles.

Rodgers threw his first TD

pass in 610 days when he took advantage of a free play when Leonard Floyd jumped off-sides to connect on a 36-yard scoring strike to Allen Lazard that cut the deficit to 26-13. Lazard caught a second TD in the closing seconds from Tyrod Taylor after the game had already been decided.

"We expect greatness when we step on the field," Rodgers said. "There were moments, moments that felt pretty good but not sustained. I felt like if we could just get a first down we'd be rolling. But we had those three and outs which hurt us. I think a lot of stuff is correctable."

Rodgers' second game with the Jets lasted much longer than his first, which ended with a season-ending Achilles injury after just four snaps in 2023.

New York went three-and-out on the opening drive this game with two handoffs and a dropped pass by Lazard before a setback on the fourth snap that was temporary instead of season ending this time around. Rodgers' first completion as a Jet was caught by Breece Hall, who had the ball punched out by Fred Warner for a lost fumble that set up a Niners field goal.

Rodgers got the Jets moving on the following drive, converting three third-down passes to Wilson to set up Hall's 3-yard TD run. Rodgers went 6 for 7 for 61 yards on the drive.

New York didn't get another first down in the half and trailed 16-7 at the break.

Dak Prescott, Cowboys agree on \$240M deal that is first at \$60M per year

CLEVELAND (AP)—The Dallas Cowboys gave Dak Prescott everything he wanted. He intends to pay them back in full.

Hours before the season opened, Prescott agreed to a \$240 million, four-year contract with the Cowboys, making the quarterback the NFL's highest paid player while giving him a chance to win a Super Bowl for a team he loves.

"I wanted to be a Cowboy," he said. "I wanted to stay a Cowboy and it got done."

Prescott is the first in league history to average \$60 million per season, a person with knowledge of the negotiations told The Associated Press on Sunday. The person spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because the deal hasn't been announced.

The runner-up in NFL MVP voting was entering the final year of a \$160 million, four-year contract that was a franchise record before this deal. It includes \$231 million guaran-

teed, the person said, \$1 million more than the record fully guaranteed deal Deshaun Watson signed with the Browns two years ago.

"I had an obligation to the league and to the other quarterbacks," he said. "It's because I was up (due) and the next guy, I expect to beat me."

Prescott was in his Cleveland hotel room getting ready to leave for Sunday's game against the Browns when his agent told him the deal was complete.

He then went out and threw one touchdown pass while leading the Cowboys to an easy 33-17 win in their season opener.

There had been speculation for weeks about whether the sides could reach an agreement. Prescott was entering his final year under contract and had hoped for a definitive answer that finally came.

"In any negotiation, one side wants something and the other side wants something else," he said. "You've got to meet in the middle. I'm just glad it's done

and it works for everyone."

Prescott said he spoke with owner and general manager Jerry Jones on Saturday and was assured the Cowboys were willing to finalize a deal.

"I know that these numbers are beyond anything that I could have ever imagined," Jones told reporters about an hour before kickoff.

Prescott has led the Cowboys to the playoffs the past three seasons and five times in his first eight years. But Dallas is looking for a postseason breakthrough that hasn't happened since the last of the franchise's five Super Bowl titles to cap the 1995 season.

The 31-year-old said repeatedly he wanted to stay with Dallas and be the QB to get the club past the divisional round for the first time in 29 years. Prescott now will get at least several more chances.

"It's about me holding up my end of the deal," he said.

"This was the thing to do for what we're here for and that

is to win a championship," Jones said. "I gave everything I ever had or hoped to have to get a chance to be a part of the Cowboys. And it's beyond my fondest dreams where we stand today."

The deal with Prescott comes less than two weeks after Dallas made All-Pro receiver CeeDee Lamb the second-highest paid player at his position with a \$136 million, four-year contract.

Prescott was a fourth-round pick out of Mississippi State in 2016 when Tony Romo was entering his 10th full season as the starter.

Romo injured his back in a preseason game, which led to Prescott starting from Week 1 of his rookie season after backup Kellen Moore also was injured before the opener.

After losing to the New York Giants, Prescott led an 11-game winning streak that was a franchise record in a single season.

Prescott edged teammate

Ezekiel Elliott, his running back, for 2016 NFL Offensive Rookie of the Year honors as they led the Cowboys to the top seed in the NFC before losing their playoff debut to Aaron Rodgers and the Green Bay Packers.

The first playoff victory with Prescott came two years later against Seattle before a divisional loss at the Los Angeles Rams.

The first of three straight 12-win playoff seasons in 2021 ended with a wild-card loss to San Francisco at home.

Prescott played one of the best games of his career a year later in a wild-card victory at Tampa Bay that was Tom Brady's last game. Another loss to the 49ers, this time in San Francisco, followed.

Hopes for a deep Dallas playoff run were their highest under Prescott last season when the Cowboys surged to the NFC's No. 2 seed late and were in position to get past the divisional round at home.

Dallas didn't even get to that game, with Prescott's

pick-6 part of a first-half meltdown for the team in a stunning 48-32 wild-card loss to Jordan Love and the Packers.

Arguably the most disappointing loss in the 34 years since Jones bought the team clouded a great regular season for Prescott, who led the NFL with a career-high 36 touchdown passes against nine interceptions and threw for 4,516 yards.

Prescott was already climbing the career QB charts for the Cowboys and now will have a chance to pass Romo and a pair of Pro Football Hall of Famers, and multiple Super Bowl winners, in Troy Aikman and Roger Staubach.

All three of his predecessors are still ahead of Prescott in career wins, with Prescott now four shy of Romo's 78 in third. Prescott is second in TDs, 44 behind Romo, and third in yards behind Romo and Aikman.

Prescott is the club's career leader with a 67% completion percentage. He has 29,638 yards passing and 203 touchdowns.

World's elite jiu-jitsu athletes set to compete in Guam



H Ā G A T Ñ A , Guam—The jiu-jitsu community is gearing up for the most anticipated event of the year as the Marianas Open International Championships returns to Guam on Oct. 12, 2024.

Hosted at the University of Guam Calvo Field House, this gi-only tournament promises a fierce competition with a staggering \$50,000 prize pool up for grabs in the male and female adult and masters open weight divisions.

The Marianas Open has long been a cornerstone of the global jiu-jitsu calendar, drawing athletes from across the globe to showcase their skills on the island of Guam.

This year's event is set to

be the biggest yet, with competitors from various countries converging in Guam to vie for top honors.

With divisions open to all ages 5 and up, the tournament offers a platform for both seasoned professionals and rising stars to shine.

For nearly two decades, the Marianas Open organization has been synonymous with excellence in jiu-jitsu, hosting premier tournaments in Guam and expanding its reach internationally with the Marianas Pro qualifier tournaments in the Philippines, Nagoya, Tokyo, Korea, El Paso, San Diego, and Las Vegas.

The Marianas Open International Championships event, a prestigious five-star ranked ASJFF tournament, has



The 2024 Marianas Open International Championships will be held at the University of Guam Calvo Field House on Oct. 12, 2024.

further solidified its reputation as a must-attend competition for elite jiu-jitsu practitioners.

As the countdown to the event begins, excitement is building among the global jiu-jitsu community. Final

registration is currently ongoing until Oct. 2, 2024. Athletes are encouraged to secure their spot in what promises to be an unforgettable tournament.

Don't miss out on the action—visit www.marianasopen.com for registration details and event information.



A staggering \$50,000 prize pool is up for grabs in the male and female adult and masters open weight divisions of the 2024 Marianas Open International Championships.

Stay updated with the latest news and behind-the-scenes content by following us on Instagram [@themarianasopen](https://www.instagram.com/themarianasopen).

Registration is ongoing at www.marianasopen.com. For more information, go to the event's website at <http://www.marianasopen.com> and Instagram [@themarianasopen](https://www.instagram.com/themarianasopen).

The Marianas Open is a premier jiu-jitsu organization that has been hosting top-tier tournaments in Guam for nearly 20 years. The Marianas Open is a five-star ranked ASJFF Tournament. Renowned for its high standards and international reach, the Marianas Open continues to be a leader in promoting jiu-jitsu excellence worldwide. (PR)

MATUA

From page 16

His heaviest squat was 495 lbs., his bench press was 405 lbs., and his deadlift was 465 lbs for a combined total weight of 1,335 lbs.

That is the number to beat in next month's challenge which will be held on the first Saturday of every month.



LEIGH GASES

Matua San Nicolas holds the barbell to his chest in a bench press attempt during the Latte Built Gym's Latte Beast 1,000LB Club Challenge in the Prime Warriors 19-39 age group last Saturday at the Latte Built Gym.

Beast Leaderboard for the entire month, showcasing their total combined weight. Their names will remain on display until the next month's challenge, where new champions may emerge to take the top spots.

San Nicolas said after the challenge, "I feel good and pumped up. I still have to work on accessories after that."

On how he felt of his performance overall with his lifts, he said, "I did okay. I just need to learn how to wait for the rack call for the bench press."

In the challenge, he hit a new personal best in the deadlift at 465 lbs. When asked how confident he was with the

numbers he put up, he said, "I wouldn't say I'm confident. There's always someone that will come and beat it. But I'm always going to come back and keep improving, and hopefully keep increasing my total every month."

He added that he's been focused on strength training for years and has competed in powerlifting competitions in the U.S. when he was 15 years old.

James Lee, a Latte Built personal trainer, was the judge of the challenge, while the spotters were Latte Built's other personal trainers—Lorenzo Sanchez, Aaron Pamintuan, Ralph Villas, and Jolo Berueco.

RELAYS

From page 16

in at 25:45.90, while Oronigo finished at 24:11.20.

In the open men's division, Calma and Olopai were the fastest with a time of 38:13.30. Calma sped into the finish line with a time of 18:16.90, and Olopai clocked in at 19:57.40.

Dan Taitano and Maverick Itibus secured second place with a combined time of 38:28.40. Taitano finished with 19:24.20, and Itibus had a time of 19:04.20.

Third place was the father-and-son duo of Justin and

Tyler Andrew who finished at 39:42.60. Tyler went first and clocked in at 19:02.00, while Justin had a time of 20:40.60.

In the junior girls, it was just the duo of Emma Chong and Alana Hayes. They came in at 46:33.50. Chong made it back with a time of 22:15.90, while Hayes clocked in at 24:18.60.

NMNPFSF president Justin Andrew said of the season so far that started in January: "The season is going as planned according to our 2024 calendar—everyone, at any level, is taking part in the races so that is great."

On how this prepares CNMI

paddlers for the upcoming 24th Annual Micronesia Cup Canoe Race this October, he said, "Just being busy training, preparing, and racing the local races is already a good way to prepare for the upcoming Micro Cup."

The next slated race is on Sept. 21; then Oct. 5-6; then Saipan will host the 24th Annual Micronesia Cup Canoe Race from Oct. 18-20; then they cap off the season with a 6- to 8-mile race in all categories on Dec. 14.

More details of the 24th Annual Micronesia Cup Canoe Race will be posted in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune*.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES									
MLB STANDINGS					NFL STANDINGS				
AMERICAN LEAGUE					AMERICAN CONFERENCE				
East Division					East				
	W	L	Pct	GB		W	L	T	Pct
New York	83	61	.576	—	Buffalo	1	0	0	1.000
Baltimore	82	63	.566	1 1/2	Miami	1	0	0	1.000
Boston	73	71	.507	10	New England	1	0	0	1.000
Tampa Bay	71	73	.493	12	N.Y. Jets	0	1	0	.000
Toronto	68	77	.469	15 1/2					
Central Division					South				
Cleveland	82	62	.569	—	Houston	1	0	0	1.000
Kansas City	79	66	.545	3 1/2	Indianapolis	0	1	0	.000
Minnesota	76	68	.528	6	Jacksonville	0	1	0	.000
Detroit	73	71	.507	9	Tennessee	0	1	0	.000
Chicago	33	112	.228	49 1/2					
West Division					North				
Houston	77	66	.538	—	Pittsburgh	1	0	0	1.000
Seattle	73	71	.507	4 1/2	Baltimore	0	1	0	.000
Texas	70	74	.486	7 1/2	Cincinnati	0	1	0	.000
Oakland	62	82	.431	15 1/2	Cleveland	0	1	0	.000
Los Angeles	60	84	.417	17 1/2					
NATIONAL LEAGUE					West				
East Division					Kansas City	1	0	0	1.000
Philadelphia	86	58	.597	—	L.A. Chargers	1	0	0	1.000
New York	79	65	.549	7	Denver	0	1	0	.000
Atlanta	78	66	.542	8	Las Vegas	0	1	0	.000
Washington	64	79	.448	21 1/2					
Miami	54	90	.375	32	NATIONAL CONFERENCE				
Central Division					East				
Milwaukee	82	61	.573	—	Dallas	1	0	0	1.000
Chicago	74	70	.514	8 1/2	Philadelphia	1	0	0	1.000
St. Louis	72	71	.503	10	N.Y. Giants	0	1	0	.000
Cincinnati	70	75	.483	13	Washington	0	1	0	.000
Pittsburgh	68	76	.472	14 1/2					
West Division					South				
Los Angeles	86	58	.597	—	New Orleans	1	0	0	1.000
San Diego	81	64	.559	5 1/2	Tampa Bay	1	0	0	1.000
Arizona	80	64	.556	6	Atlanta	0	1	0	.000
San Francisco	71	73	.493	15	Carolina	0	1	0	.000
Colorado	54	90	.375	32					
					North				
					Chicago	1	0	0	1.000
					Detroit	1	0	0	1.000
					Minnesota	1	0	0	1.000
					Green Bay	0	1	0	.000
					West				
					San Francisco	1	0	0	1.000
					Seattle	1	0	0	1.000
					Arizona	0	1	0	.000
					L.A. Rams	0	1	0	.000



**Pirates beat
Marlins 3-2
as Skenes
strikes out 9**

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**World's
elite jiu-jitsu
athletes set
to compete
in Guam
PAGE 15**



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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Jen/Dayna, Carter/Ben top V1 relays

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Dayna Macaranas and Jenisha Dubrall topped the open women V1 mile relay, while Carter Calma and Ben Olopai were the fastest in the open men V1 relay during the ongoing 2024 Northern Marianas National Paddling Sports Federation season last Saturday.



The V1 relay course was from the outer tank off the waters of Kilili Beach to the Susupe tank next to the Sugar Dock and back to Kilili Beach. Each team consisted of two paddlers per team—one paddler did one lap, while the other paddled the second lap. They have individual times as well as combined times.

Macaranas was up first and clocked in at 23:07.20, while Dubrall



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Open women v1 relay first place Jenisha Dubrall, far right, and partner Dayna Macaranas, second left, pose with third placers Erryne Dasalla, far left, and Vinalynn Oronigo, second right, after last Saturday's race of the ongoing 2024 Northern Marianas National Paddling Sports Federation season at Kilili Beach.

clocked in at 22:03.00. Their combined total time was 45:10.20 which was enough for first place.

Second was Lori Rabe and

Sakura Halstead with a total time of 47:12.00. Rabe clocked in at 22:31.40, while Halstead came in at 25:02.60.

Third went to Erryne Dasalla and Vinalynn Oronigo with a combined time of 49:55.10. Dasalla clocked

See RELAYS on Page 15

Matua SN is current leader of 1,000LB club challenge



LEIGH GASES

Matua San Nicolas holds the locked position successfully in his deadlift attempt during the Latte Built Gym's Latte Beast 1,000LB Club Challenge in the Prime Warriors 19-39 age group last Saturday at the Latte Built Gym.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The current leader in Latte Built Gym's Latte Beast 1,000LB Club Challenge is Matua San Nicolas, who opened the floor of the Prime Warriors 19-39 age group with a whopping 1,335-lb total weight lifted last Saturday at the Latte Built Gym.

The monthly competition de-

LATTE BEAST 1,000LB CLUB CHALLENGE

signed to test strength, skill, and determination was absolutely obliterated by the 19-year-old who lifted a one-rep max in the three core lifts: squat, bench press, and deadlift.

See MATUA on Page 15



LEIGH GASES

Matua San Nicolas lowers himself for a squat attempt in the first month of Latte Built Gym's Latte Beast 1,000LB Club Challenge in the Prime Warriors 19-39 age group last Saturday at the Latte Built Gym.

Brilliant Star sweeps ES division



LEIGH GASES

Elementary school cross-country runners run out of the starting line during the first PSS/NMA All Schools Cross-Country 2024-2025 qualifier at the CPA Airport Field last Saturday.

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



Brilliant Star Montessori School cross-country runners put their best feet forward and swept the elementary school divisions of the first PSS/NMA All Schools Cross-Country 2024-2025 qualifier at the CPA Airport Field last Saturday.

Their legs—although little—took them as fast as they could through the

one-mile course around the field on a blisteringly hot early morning.

They took first place in the boys division with a score of 31 points, while second was Agape Christian School Torchbearers at 50. Third was Grace Christian Academy Eagles with 53 points.

In the girls division, BSS won with a score of 34 points. Saipan International School Geckos' score of 38 landed them in second, while Mount Carmel School was at third place with 47 points.

In the individual standings, Top 3 in the boys division were GCA's Beau Bauer who rushed into first with a time of 6:52. Second was SIS' Gabriel Walsh at 7:30, and third was Kagman Elementary School's Brayden Brennfleck who clocked in at 7:43.

Top 3 in the girls division was BSS' Lovel Spaeth with the second fastest overall time of 7:17. Second was SIS' Olivia Walsh with a time of 8:60, while third went to SIS' Kaylen Taflinger at just a second behind with 8:07.

In an interview after the race, Spaeth said that it was kind of hard, but that she felt good when she felt the



LEIGH GASES

Elementary school boys division first place Grace Christian Academy's Beau Bauer digs in as he sprints into first place in the first PSS/NMA All Schools Cross-Country 2024-2025 qualifier at the CPA Airport Field last Saturday.



LEIGH GASES

Elementary school girls division first place Brilliant Star Montessori School's Lovel Spaeth runs the last few meters of the first PSS/NMA All Schools Cross-Country 2024-2025 qualifier at the CPA Airport Field last Saturday.

breeze blow a little bit at one part of the course.

On how she felt coming in first place, the 10-year-old said, "It feels good... I'm a little bit competitive and I know the boy who came in first—we race a lot, so he kind of pushed me to go faster."

The next qualifier is Saturday, Sept. 14, hosted by Run Saipan at the American Memorial Park; the SIS Gecko 5000 at Banzai Cliff is on Sept. 28; the ISA Invitational with the location to be determined is on Oct. 5; and the championship is set for Oct. 12 at the Saipan Country Club at Saipan Vegas.